356 much relation to what the other workers are doing. Men, women and children all work together, and the task proceeds in a rather haphazard fashion, to the accompaniment of a constant fire of jokes, most of them obscene. When the work is finished all those who have helped are given a feast.

●776 Attached to some households and fields is an ambivalent supernatural called *Thyak-dum* (white head). If this supernatural is good-tempered and contented he will bring health and prosperity to the home, and possibly, though people are not so sure about this, punish marauders in the family's fields; if he is angry he will bring disease and loss to the people who neglect him. Consequently when people live in a new house they must find out if *Thyak-dum* [787] lives there, and if so, if they can control him. His whereabouts are discovered by a Mun going into meditation and seeing his presence mystically. If the house-owners can control *Thyak-dum* they will burn butter and incense leaves on some embers, and then sprinkle these embers with water and tell the supernatural to go [782] away. If this fails they will make the *lafét* sacrifice (this sacrifice recurs constantly in the ceremonies of the Mun). On a wicker winnowing tray are placed banana leaves, and on top of them three rows of ground corn, and pieces of ginger, wild bird and dried fish; this offering is dedicated by a Mun who also offers *chi* in a cup ceremonially buttered; after which the sacrifice is taken to the top of some high place and left there, uneaten.

In some houses however it is divined that though *Thyak-dum* 346 is present the house-owner cannot control him. In such cases a little house has to be built for him, standing in the fields near the house. This 'devil's house' consists of a miniature Lepcha house about two feet wide, thatched and made of bamboo, raised about four feet off the ground on four bamboos. Nobody except the sacrificer (preferably a Mun, but any man who knows how and 346 is not a lama will do) must touch, or even go too near this 'devil's 782 house'; were anyone to do so they would become seriously ill. Twice a year, when the barley and when the rice is ripe, sacrifices must be placed inside this devil's house; the sacrifice consists of the fresh grain, together with meat, fish and silver money. When the new sacrifice is made the old one is removed and thrown away; the money however can be taken back into use. Besides these sacrifices a special pig must be kept penned for *Thyak-dum*; this pig is always called the pig of *Thyak-dum*. When it gets old it must be replaced by a young piglet; the old one is killed, and its cooked

intestines—the heart, liver and lungs, the *shafot*—are cooked with 346
rice and offered to *Thyak-dum* together with three *patyoot* of fresh [782]
chi. *Thyak-dum* is partially attached to the house, and partially to
the inhabitants thereof; that is to say that people coming into a new 346
house would have to exorcise him were they able to do so; but if 776
the old inhabitants had moved to another dwelling *Thyak-dum* would accompany them, spending most of his time with them, but occasionally returning to his and their old home. This last point is almost purely theoretical, for it very very seldom happens that Lepchas change their homes. If a house proved consistently unlucky, with many people dying and nothing prospering, and if it were divined that the house was the cause of these disasters, the survivors might move; but although some houses in Lingthem had had far more than their share of death and misfortune the inhabitants still stayed in them. The only reason for which houses were actually abandoned was loneliness, because the few survivors preferred to live with relations rather than cope with the work alone.

V

In front of each Lepcha house is a field fenced in with bamboo; 241
it is called the garden (*sing*), and in it are raised those vegetables
and roots which are used for flavouring food. These however are 311
only grown in small quantities on the edge, and the greater part of the field is sown with grain crops; first of all barley and spring wheat mixed, which ripens in April, and subsequently maize. This garden is the only portion of Lepcha land which receives animal manure; it is against the house, under which domestic animals shelter at night; their dung is collected and thrown over the fence. At the bottom of nearly every garden is a plantation of bamboos, cultivated so as to have an easily available supply of this invaluable material. Near the house too are usually a small number of fruit trees—oranges, peaches, apples, pears, plums, tree-tomatoes—and occasionally one or two shrubs, usually roses, are grown for their flowers.

The rest of the land of the household is scattered all over the surrounding district, and it is seldom that people own the land near their house. All possess some strips of land—often more than a dozen for a single household—on the warmer lower slopes
of the valley, where the climate is suitable for the cultivation of
wet rice, cardamum, and some of the earlier millets or eleusines. 241

241 The big fields, which are cleared by burning once every eight years, where the main crops of dry rice, buckwheat and millet are raised, are mostly above the level of the houses; so that it is by no means unusual for people to have fields three or more miles away from their houses, and three thousand feet higher up or lower down the mountain side. Consequently field-houses are built for
241 those periods when there is heavy work to be done in the fields—
342 either weeding, or chasing away predatory birds and beasts from the ripening crops, or harvesting. In the permanent cultivations down in the valley these field-houses are solidly built structures, consisting only of a single room but otherwise in all respects similar to the ordinary Lepcha house. In some cases they are permanently inhabited by one or two members of a household either for reasons of health or because they do not agree too well with the other members. These field-houses however are built at any time without any ceremony for the selection of the site or at any time in the course of construction; and they are not included in the house-tax. The field-houses in the temporary cultivations are very flimsy affairs chiefly made out of matting.

481 The extremely precipitous nature of the ground renders travelling extremely difficult for Europeans who are accustomed to levelled paths and who walk shod. The Lepchas, owing to long habit, are magnificent walkers and climbers, and can cover enormous distances without apparent fatigue or breathlessness. I found the descent to the river which I made one day to witness the repairing of the bamboo bridge—a descent of about three thousand feet in a mile and a half—and the return therefrom, almost exhausting; the Lepchas will make the same journey without discomfort two or three times a day. Their physical strength and agility is amazing;
[482] over paths, or rather tracks, where experienced mountaineers need to use both hands, the Lepchas will carry heavy loads on their backs. Indeed one day Chala Mandal, the head of the village, after he had been recounting semi-legendary, semi-historical stories of the past exploits of the Lepchas, said with a deprecating smile 'Nowadays all the Lepchas are good for is carrying loads.'

vi

776 Writers about Sikkim and Tibet who incidentally mention the Lepchas refer to them with surprising unanimity as 'animists'; and the references to devils' habitations in the desiderata for a house-

776 site given above might suggest that such a term was justified. To my mind however such a conclusion would be completely erroneous, if animism is understood to mean the worship or reverence of natural objects for the forces implicit in them. The very complicated beliefs of the Lepchas' two (I should perhaps write three) religions will be dealt with fully later, but the religious attitude towards natural objects can be briefly summarised. All supernaturals, good and bad, though eternally living outside the world, have innumerable manifestations with which this world is filled. These manifestations, or replicas, of the supernaturals, choose various natural phenomena for semi-permanent habitation, agreeable phenomena—lakes, or fruit-trees or fruitful land—if the supernaturals are generally benevolent; disagreeable places—useless trees, water-falls, rocks or barren ground—if the supernaturals are generally malevolent. Each type of supernatural has a preference for a particular kind of habitation; thus all the deut *moong*—fever devils—live in big isolated trees, sabdok *moong*—skin-disease devils—in outcrops of rock.

774 According to lamaist beliefs everything in the world (with the exception of the earth itself and some big mountains) possesses a soul; for the soul is the animating principle of all life, without whose intermediary nothing could move or grow. But the souls of objects and animals below the vertebrates are very weak and transient things; they are easily killed and never reincarnate. For the lamaists the soul is the verbal equivalent of life; and the 'soul' of a rock or tree is only the essential quality of the rock or tree with no powers beyond making the rock hold together or the tree grow in due season. The soul of a rock or tree or river is not altered if a supernatural takes up his abode therein.

776 The word with which Lepchas invariably refer to the habitations
753 of supernaturals is *li*, the word which they use for their own houses.
The houses of supernaturals—particularly malevolent supernaturals
778 —are avoided, because the devil might be annoyed at the intrusion
on his privacy and would show his resentment by inflicting illness
on the intruders. Similarly the supernatural would resent any
injury done to his house, such as cutting down his tree or chipping
off parts of his stone, and would punish the rash man by paining him
in that portion of his body which corresponded to that portion of
778 the house which had been destroyed; thus cutting from the top of
a tree or a rock would result in head pains, from a branch or an
776 outcrop in arm ache, and so on. Consequently the recognised

Consequently the recognised

778 habitations of devils are paid the respect of avoidance; and should
●776 a man be forced to go near to one of an evening he would perhaps
[782] burn a little incense—either juniper leaves or rice mixed with butter—so that the devil shall be gratified and not pursue him.

Except for being avoided and pointed out as local curiosities these devils' habitations are not distinguished in any way. Sacrifices are generally not made to or near them; if it were divined that illness was caused by a manifestation of a devil whose exact habitation was known, offerings might be made at that place; but I neither came across nor heard of one specific instance of this. All the numerous ceremonies that I witnessed and heard about took place in or just outside the house of the actual or potential sufferer; and though the offerings were often carried away after, they were never taken to the devil's habitation, but either to uncultivated ground, or to a place where two paths crossed. Only in one case did I hear of a devil's habitation being paid attention to. In the 'garden' of Jiroong are two outcrops of rock, which are the homes of Sabdok *moong* and [753] his wife Loo *moong*. This female devil causes a specific skin disease, and if a person living in the neighbourhood should suffer from this, her stone (the lower of the two) will be anointed with holy water by a lama, and with milk by a Mun. It had been discovered by divination that this was the only home of Loo *moong* in the immediate neighbourhood, and the somewhat rare skin-disease, which is her speciality, could only arise from the anger of that particular manifestation.

782 The three big stones called *Kali lyang* in different parts of Lingthem fall into a different category. They are the places where laymen make sacrifices to keep away predatory animals. These sacrifices of different sorts of food are made once in the hot weather and once in the cold, and at other times if predatory animals are causing anxiety or annoyance. The stones themselves have no supernatural value at all; they are just the places where the sacrifices are always made.

778 There is however one big exception to the general rule. Nearly every family line—*ptso*—originated from the union of a particular
782 lake and a particular mountain, the lake being the mother.[12] To
753 these maternal lakes either annual or triennial (depending on the
614 customs of the *ptso* in question) offerings must be made by all the descendants, or the inhabiting supernatural will withdraw her

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[12] The Salong *ptso*, to which the serpent eaters of Pantoong belonged, is peculiar in tracing its original ancestor to the union of a woman with a monkey.

778

favour and the people will not prosper and may suffer from sore 753
eyes. It is not necessary that everyone should visit the lake in 782
person; gifts can be given by proxy by another member of the 614
same *ptso*.

There is another lake, *Luksom partam*, high up in Zongu, from 842
whence birth is meant to have originated. Sterile couples who
wish for children should visit this lake, spend the night on its bank 823
copulating, and then in the morning throw into the waters a silver
rupee and a *chimi* (altar light) to please the gods. If necessary this
may be repeated annually for three years. The old widow, a nun,
who told me about this had performed the complete rite with her
husband, but unsuccessfully.

The connection between water and birth runs all through the 823
Mun mythology. In the divine world where the two gods Tak-bo-
thing and Narzong-*nyou* live there is a stream called Lungfung 773
which represents the birth of male children, and a well called
Rung-zel *oong-lap* which represents the birth of female children.
This well is guarded by a supernatural boy called Sathim *ong*, and
on occasion a family which has many girls and no boys will get a
Mun to make sacrifices to the boy and the two gods to make the
two pieces of water change place.

It will be noted that even in the case of these sacred lakes an explicit distinction is made between the lakes themselves and the supernaturals who inhabit them.

Devils have been occasionally seen by some people, sometimes 776●
looking like fierce animals, sometimes more or less like human
beings (though generally covered with hair), sometimes as misty
and gigantic shapes. They are far more frequently heard, whistling
and crying, sometimes wailing like a banshee; and the god of
hunters, Pong *rum*, persecutes those who displease him with polter-
geist-like performances, throwing stones at the people or their houses
and so on. To see or hear a devil is alarming, but not excessively
so; there is nothing to be done except to run away or to turn
aside one's eyes; though some bold people throw stones at devils
and shoo them away as though they were marauding dogs. In the
case of poltergeist performances the sufferer will burn incense, or
perhaps just smoke a cigarette at the devil. To guard against the
accidental meeting of devils the lamas prepare amulets, composed
of charms written on paper and sewn into a piece of cloth which [751
is worn on the dress; and Mun give the specially prepared roots 824]
of *s'lek* (a dioeceous plant which grows above the snow level) to
be rubbed over the body.

776 be rubbed over the body. Some men also carry a little arrow poison in a bag fastened inside their clothes over the heart. The greater number of people however do not take any of these precautions.

For the Lepchas devils are rather similar to the witches in European folklore; they are malevolent but not necessarily particularly intelligent; and there are numerous stories of devils being fooled by fairly simple devices, just as the witch was fooled in the story of *Hansel and Gretel.* There is no belief at all in ghosts or *revenants*; should the simulacrum of a dead person be seen it would be a devil in disguise. But although many people told me of having heard or seen devils, I did not hear a single story of any one seeing the dead or absent.

vii

133 This then is the landscape in which the rest of the book is set. To the south the hills rise steeply to an invisible crest; to the north the ground descends precipitously to the hidden Talung river, and then rises opposite even more steeply; behind the fairly barren hills are the peaks of Siniolchi and its eastern neighbours, jagged black rock topped with gleaming snow. At the western end of the Talung valley rises the stupendous mass of Kinchenjunga and its neighbouring peaks, Gods and the home of Gods. To the east are the green hills of Sikkim, and beyond the ragged snow-mountains which mark the frontier of Tibet.

For the European the landscape is one of overwhelming beauty, spoilt only by the very considerable difficulty of travelling about, [137] so rocky and precipitous is the land. The picture I should like to convey is of a very steep and broken series of hillsides, except in small clefts nearly bare of big trees, but almost entirely covered with low growths of shrubs and saplings of various tints of green, flecked with patches of colour at some seasons; the yellow sweet-smelling daphne *edgeworthiana*, the blue hydrangea-like flower of *dichroa febrifuga*, the rich purple of the Sikkim rose. Here and there, scattered over the hillsides, are pieces of cleared and burned land, with the larger tree-trunks standing up lopped and charred; pieces of land placed in seemingly quite arbitrary positions, with large stretches of green between them. Down in the valley the ground appears slightly more cultivated; there are roughly terraced fields fenced with bamboo hurdles, and occasional small rectangles

556 feckless or unlucky who have not the ground to use the help which
is their due are given grain for their labour. Only with cardamum,
which is a money-producing, and not a food-producing crop, is
help paid for with money. The care of orphans, cripples, idiots
[736] and other helpless people in exchange for the labour they can give
cannot be considered as exploitation.

● 776 Although riches and prosperity are so desirable they are fraught
with supernatural dangers; there is a devil called Ginoo *moong*
556 which attacks the over-prosperous; it is in a way Nemesis, and in
a way the incarnation of other people's envious thoughts. The
origin of Ginoo *moong* is told in the following story:

773 'Once upon a time there was a family called Ginoo, which consisted of seven brothers and one sister. The seven brothers had a
539 house in Lingthem up above the monastery; they had seven wives and seven sons and seven daughters and seven sons-in-law and seven daughters-in-law; they were so numerous that they could do all the field-work between here and Mangan in one day and would eat between them a whole goat at one meal. However these people had no oxen, no jewels, and no permanent cultivation.[3] When they went out to work two people had to stop at home to do the cooking and one to gather leaves for the fire. Their sister lived lower in the valley; she was a widow and had a single daughter, but she had sixty heads of oxen and many necklaces and jewels, so heavy that they weighed six seers. This woman was a Mun; she lived in the house, while her daughter slept in a shed.

'Now the brothers grumbled and spoke among themselves saying "We have nothing, no jewels and no cattle, and we could use them; our sister is a widow and excessively rich; if we were to kill her we should possess all her wealth." So they made a plan and they went up to her house at dead of night and cut her to pieces with their knives and crept back unobserved. When this occurred the daughter who was sleeping in the shed woke up with a start, thinking "What is the matter with my mother?" And she was frightened and ran to her mother's house. When she arrived there she found the verandah spattered with blood, and inside her mother sat trembling. The brothers had hacked her body to pieces but she was a very powerful Mun and all the pieces had joined together. The mother said to her daughter "Why have you come? Your maternal uncles have killed me. Now you are here go and gather

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[177] [3] It is interesting to note the manner in which these very recent signs of wealth have been incorporated into the old story.

773 'From that time Ginoo *moong pandi* and Linthem *anyou* destroy
539 all those who are too prosperous or have too many children. That
is the reason why you should never remark on a person's prosperity;
for if Ginoo *moong* hears you they will lose everything.'

Ginoo *moong* still claims victims today. One of the latest was
● 776 the wife of Ongden, one of the richest members of the community,
unique in having six healthy sons. She was always grumbling,
saying how poor she was and how little ground they had been
able to sow; to which the neighbours would reply 'How greedy
you are; you are really very prosperous.' Ginoo *moong* heard
this talk, and so she died, while still young. It is also perhaps the
[421] fear of Ginoo *moong* which makes Lepchas so reluctant to say what
124 their property is; it was practically the only subject on which
people were secretive and unwilling to talk; most of the information
I obtained on the subject I got from neighbours. The majority
[556] of the households are all on nearly the same economic level; four
or five are somewhat above, and three below the average.

iii

243 The chief crops raised by the Lepchas on the Talung side of
Zongu are wet rice, dry rice, buckwheat, maize, cardamum, and
different varieties of millet or eleusine. On the warmer Teesta side
[249] a certain amount of sugar cane and manioc is also raised. The wet
rice is naturally exclusively cultivated on the terraced fields, which are capable of being flooded. Seven different types of wet rice are recognised—two of them being suitable for cultivation on the higher terraces, while the other five need the warmer climate of the valley. Some of the richer people grow these five varieties in rotation, as this is believed to rest the soil, the variety sown depending on individual choice; in these cases the seed is not saved, but is bought each year, generally from Gangtok. The majority however only grow one variety and save their own seed.

In Lingthem wet rice has been introduced for less than twenty
years, and in other villages even more recently; some places,
especially on the far side of the Talung, where the natural water is
[242] less plentiful, do not grow it yet. When the Mandal first learned
about this crop he had experimental terraces made for three years;
it was then gradually adopted by the other villagers, as they became convinced of the superior yield of this crop, and the amount of terraced ground is increased annually. Almost every household

and powerful is the Jamyong *ptso* to which Chala Mandal belongs. 614
Eleven of the thirty-two households belong to this *ptso* representing in all sixty-two individuals, or nearly a third of the population of the village (176); but from this number must be subtracted the twenty-one married women from other *ptso*; I have not reckoned the daughters who have married into other *ptso*. Zumchyung *ptso*, to which Tafoor and his family belong, is the next most populous; it represents five households and thirty-one people, less the ten married women. At the other end of the scale are the Demik and Lubdong Rabji *ptso*, with only a single representative of each—Katel and Pargeut—in the neighbourhood. As far as I can tell from questioning visitors to Lingthem, the situation is similar in the other bigger villages; one or two large and numerous *ptso*, of which the Mandal is nearly always a member, and several other smaller ones.[1]

There is a slight advantage in belonging to a numerous *ptso* because you have more people you can call 'brothers' on whose help you can count automatically; but it is not an overwhelming advantage, on account of the Lepcha habits of co-operation, and some of the richest and most successful people of Lingthem were members of small *ptso*. In the choice of a son- or daughter-in-law the size of the *ptso* is sometimes taken into consideration; it is better for a child-in-law to come from a numerous *ptso*, for then there will be greater possibility of obtaining a second spouse, in the event of the first one's sterility or death. A stranger such as Tempa who marries into a populous *ptso* (his wife's father was Jamyong *ptso*) has the same advantages as if he were himself a member of it and his wife's relations behave to him exactly as if they were his own.

Each *ptso* is under the guardianship of certain supernaturals, who are worshipped by all the male members of the *ptso*; every third year all the men of one locality gather together and make a sacrifice of an ox and certain jewels and valuables (these latter are only symbolically offered and are subsequently retaken into use) followed by a feast; these feasts are held in rotation in the houses of the members of the *ptso* who live in the neighbourhood. This sacrifice is entirely under the direction of the Mun, with no admixture of lamaism at all, and a few of the more pious lamas refuse to participate in them, claiming that the lamas have in Chukyoong *rum* a 'guild' supernatural more powerful and more worthy of worship than the 614 776

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[1] The distribution of *ptso* in Lingthem is tabulated in Appendix I, b.

614 776 gods of the *ptso*; but the greater number of lamas feel no metaphysical qualms and bear their full share in this Mun ceremony. The *ptso* supernaturals are always invoked by the Mun when they perform a ceremony for the benefit of a particular individual. In the Mun theogony all the *ptso* supernaturals are friendly and there is no rivalry between the groups; it is thought that the more populous the *ptso* the stronger the guardian supernaturals.

The *ptso* supernaturals descend, as it were, from father to son; women have other different supernaturals which descend from mother to daughter; with the consequence that brothers and sisters have different guardian supernaturals, although all children are counted as members of their father's *ptso*. (An exception must be [848] made in the case of unacknowledged bastards, who are considered to be members of the *ptso* of their mother's father.) These women's supernaturals are invoked, along with numberless others, at the Mun ceremonies after sowing and harvesting, and special sacrifices are made in their intention in the case of illness. Special sacrifices are also made to them at the time of the marriage feast, and the questioning of the bride about her special supernaturals is one of the most formalised incidents in the marriage ceremonies. 776 There are certain other supernaturals which are common to all women; these include Ami *rum*, the god of riches, and Katong Fi who visits women in their dreams and copulates with them at the time of their menses; this dream-copulation is meant to continue throughout life, and should a month pass without this dream it means that the woman is shortly going to die. Parallel to these exclusively female supernaturals are Pong *rum*, and his wife Shing *rum*, the patrons of hunting, who are worshipped exclusively by men. There are also other supernaturals who are as it were patrons of each sex respectively, and yet others who belong to the family, as distinct from the *ptso*. Among the countless supernaturals with which the world is filled these personal and private ones have no great significance; along with numberless others—the enumeration of gods in a Mun sacrifice may take two or three hours—they are prayed to for the blessings of long life, many children, and prosperity, but their power is not considered to be great.

614 Except as an exogamic classification the *ptso* is now functionless. Although members of the different *ptso* are scattered, not only throughout Zongu, but wherever Lepchas live, the triennial unions only gather those members who live near one another; to the best of my knowledge there has never been, nor has there ever

incur supernatural dangers, it is not the wrong-doer alone who is 771
involved, but the whole of his family group; punishment is seen
if members of a person's family die or suffer, even though the 779
evil-doer survives himself. Indeed according to Lepcha ethics
it could be said that anti-social acts are graded according to the
number of people they may affect; only for acts of minor importance
is there personal and individual punishment which falls on the
evil-doer.

On some subjects there is agreement between the two religions, 756
notably on the ambivalent nature of supernatural beings; in both
religions the supernaturals are divided into three categories, mostly 771
benevolent, neutral, and mostly malevolent. The supernaturals 776
which are mostly benevolent are called gods, *rum*, those mostly 779
malevolent devils, *moong*; but both agree that if the gods are displeased they take on a terrifying and threatening aspect, and that the best way to deal with devils is to flatter them temporarily by treating them as gods; and whether gods or devils are prayed to the ceremony always ends by begging them vehemently to *go away*. Whatever their chief aspects the supernaturals are potentially dangerous. The ambivalent supernaturals, such as *Thyak-dum*, or Hlamen Djémé (a lamaist supernatural equated with the Mun spirit), are called either *moong* or *rum* according to the personal dealings of the speaker with them at that moment.

Lamas and Mun are also agreed on the meaningful and prophetic 756
character of dreams. The dreams of everybody are significant for
those who have the knowledge to interpret them; the significance 771
lies, not in the actions of the dream (as a rule), but in the seeing of 779
certain objects which have a symbolical meaning. The causation of
dreams is however different for the two religions, as is to some extent 787
their interpretation; for the Mun dreams are sent by supernaturals, for the lamas they are the experiences of the soul released from the body by sleep; unbound by space or time the soul has experiences with the souls of other people, supernaturals and objects, and, on its return, informs the body it inhabits. For the Mun the soul is a very vague concept, practically only having an independent existence after the death of the body; the lamas however know all about souls.

The content of dreams can be divided into two classes; those that foretell some future 'natural' event, and those that foretell the presence of some, usually dangerous, supernatural. For the latter some apotropaic ceremony is usually available and in some cases essential; according to the supernatural indicated the ceremony will be performed by a lama or Mun.

787 Kurma foretold my headache with the following dream: he saw me walking along the riverbank with his mother-in-law, came to salute me, and I gave him a silver rupee. Later in the day I asked him to repeat the dream which he did as follows:—'The Sahib[2] dressed in his usual clothes went to the valley with my mother-in-law, I was coming from the forest along the river and I saluted the Sahib with joined hands[3] whereupon he presented me with a silver rupee. I then said to my mother-in-law "The sahib has come to see us: what can we set before him as a present?" My mother-in-law replied "The sahib has come to walk and to fish in the river; we have nothing suitable for him—no chickens, no eggs. What can we give?" After that I woke up.'

The interpretation of the dream was fulfilled; to dream that you are given silver means that you will get a good drink of *chi*, and this was fulfilled when Kurma called on the Mandal earlier in the day to discuss village affairs with him. The mother-in-law in my company showed that I was the victim of a female devil Langteun *a-nyou* who brings head-ache and eye-ache and thirst. Any ugly or dirty or badly-dressed woman represents this devil; the fact that it was his mother-in-law was without significance.(!) Had the head-ache persisted I should have hired a Mun to drive the devil away with offerings of *chi* and incense.

●776 779 The demonology and, to a lesser extent, the hagiology of lamaism and the Mun religion are unified by a system of cross-identification in the two mythologies. Devils, and to a lesser extent gods, in one mythology are equated with differently-named supernaturals with similar attributes in the other. It thus happens that supernaturals have nearly all two names at least; but for Lepchas, as has been said, names are impermanent and without significance and no discomfort is felt from this. Some extraordinary tangles result from these identifications: the most popular lamaist god, called alterna-

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I put these remarks down to courtesy. In fact, however, I was taken ill within a week of leaving Lingthem and had to go into hospital almost immediately on returning home. I did not recollect Tafoor's repeated prophecies till some months later, when going over my notes.

[195] [2] The polite Lepcha term for a European is *Sé-pano*, which I believe to be a corruption of Sahib. *Pano* means a king, but the first syllable is apparently meaningless. The less polite word is *mik-dum*—white eyes. Europeans or fair people in dreams are good-omened, dirty people ill-omened.

[576] [3] The two hands cupped together and held in front of the breast is a respectful attitude and gifts must always be received with joined hands, to indicate that the gift, whatever its nature, is overpoweringly large.

tively Sakya Muni, Guru Rimpuché (beloved teacher), or Tashey- 776
thing has been equated with Tak-bo-*thing*, in Mun theology the 779
first man and the first hero, the grandson of Itpomu, the Creative
Mother, and the two change places in mythology, according to the
preference of the speaker, even in stories quite unsuitable to lamaist
ethics (for example in the stories of the origin of eating fish and
pork, where the hero kills the original fish- or pig-devil). And the
confusion does not end there; after Tak-bo-*thing* and Tashey-
thing have been telescoped into one person they are again separated
into two with two simultaneous births in different places: the Mun
hero is said to have been born underground at the same moment
as the lamaist saint was born in heaven.

These confusions however are more obvious to the analytical 779
European than to the practising Lepcha. With the exception of
the crucial point of killing animals the Lepchas do not appear to
be conscious of the implied contradictions; and the lamas through
their education in the scriptures and through the casting of horoscopes
have already such a training in sophistry that they almost
automatically reconcile any implicit contraditions. In by far the
greater number of ceremonies for private individuals Mun and
lamas perform simultaneously contradictory rites for identical
ends, with the Mun usually in the 'kitchen' and the lamas in the
'parlour.' Inside the monastery precincts Mun are never allowed
to practise; but in a number of the calendrical festivals on 'neutral'
ground the two perform side by side. Only for one private ceremony [756
are the Mun entirely excluded; they can take no part at all 764]
in the funeral ceremonies of a lama. On the other hand the Mun
have the speciality of most of the ceremonies connected with crops
and hunting and some apotropaic rites.

Theoretically there is no quarrel between the two religions, but 756
there is a certain veiled rivalry between their priests. The lamas 793
accuse the Mun of using their supernatural powers for unworthy 578
private ends, for instance killing magically the spouses of people
they desire so as to be able to enjoy them without interruption, and
the Mun accuse the lamas of being more sensual than the average [273]
man, more dependent on constant sexual intercourse and drink;
abstention is possible for the layman, intolerable for the lama.
As far as drink is concerned I think the charge is justified; the
amount of *chi* consumed by lamas is incalculable. As soon as
they settle down for a ceremony a *patyoot* is placed beside them,
and constantly refilled and renewed; the chanting—and lamaist

773 *verbatim*, though not necessarily to an audience, by the Sacrificer
on the second day of the marriage feast. I am giving a somewhat
539 shortened version of it in an Appendix,[*] but there are one or two
581 points to which I should like to draw attention. Tarbong-bo, the
inventor of marriage, was Itpomu's youngest son, and was still
drinking her milk when he saw, desired and tried to rape Na-rip-
nom; when he failed in this because he had not given the proper
presents his mother sent him to his elder brother Komsi*thing* for
[881] advice and help. It will be noticed that there is no sort of transition or *rite de passage* between the child and the boy of marrying age; and that the elder brother, and not the father or paternal or maternal uncle is the natural person for a young man to turn to for help and advice. In the Mun mythology the father is never important; Débu, the husband of Itpomu, is merely a name, without personality or independent existence; it seems possible that he is a relatively modern importation. I think the same is possibly true of Tak-bo-*thing*, the grandchild of Itpomu and the child of Narzong-*nyou* (sometimes his father is Komsi*thing*, sometimes some other male supernatural); Tak-bo-*thing* is simultaneously a supernatural and the first human being and a great number of stories are told about him, chiefly to explain the origin of different human customs; but he is inextricably confused with Tashey-*thing* or Guru Rimpuché, and it seems to me probable that he is to a very great extent a Tibetan import, though probably anterior to the Lepcha's conversion to lamaism.

756 The chief supernaturals of the Mun are the two feminine deities
Itpomu and Narzong-*nyou*. Itpomu herself is never directly
776 invoked; it is always her creations who are sacrificed and prayed to. Narzong-*nyou* is really the chief Lepcha goddess; she is as it were the local God of Sikkim, of the Lepchas' country; she lived in the country and is responsible for its geography, flora, and, especially fauna. She is also responsible for a great number of institutions. Her elder brother and husband Komsi*thing* is also responsible for a number of habits and institutions, but he is in a way a foreigner; after he and his wife separated he took himself to Tibet. Except in the harvest rites the two of them are always mentioned in prayers and sacrifices, together with all the other supernaturals involved. The invocation usually takes hours, for all the relevant gods in all their manifestations, with their wives and their children must be mentioned by name; in private sacrifices

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[*] See Appendix IV.

756 all the personal and *ptso* gods of the sufferer and his family must
776 also be included.

Apart from the two long 'scriptural' stories there are a vast
538 number of shorter stories which are known by most of the older
773 people and recounted on a variety of occasions. Nearly all of these the Lepchas call *lung-then*.[9] In its general meaning *lung-then* is the word applied to any traditional custom which cannot be neglected, such as the giving of feasts; applied to stories it means roughly 'tales of origin'. All *lung-then* end with the words 'And that is why today . . .' expressed or implied.

Lung-then can be divided into two groups: those dealing with supernaturals and human beings, and those dealing exclusively with animals. The most peculiar feature of the stories dealing with anthropomorphic characters is the preponderating rôle played by the genitalia, which are almost endowed with independent life; various semi-heroic humans and supernaturals possess genitalia of peculiar formation and characteristics, and the adventures of these organs together with the bodies to which they are attached are told
841 in a number of tales. One of these stories I think worth repeating, for it is, as far as I know, unparalleled in any other mythology;
539 it is the story of the Origin of Menstruation. The story is universally known and is repeated whenever the subject is brought up. The story would appear to be capable of two interpretations, both of them congruent with the Lepcha attitude to the similarity and difference between men and women. On the one hand it indicates an extraordinary conception of the equality of men and women, for menstruation is considered almost everywhere as one of women's greatest disabilities. But it can equally well be interpreted as male envy of women and their more conspicuous physiological functions, a deeply hidden envy which can be supported by the Lepcha belief[10] that male intervention is necessary to start the physical signs of female puberty. The story is as follows:

'Originally women had their vulvas on the top of their heads. Then the menstrual blood used to flow all over their faces and it looked so unpleasant that the gods transferred the blood to men's knees; but then, when they went hunting and travelled about the country the blood used to drip everywhere, and Narzong-*nyou* saw this and was displeased thereat. Moreover the gods still did not like the vulvas on the top of the heads, so they called for volunteers

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[9] Examples of these and other Lepcha stories are given in Appendix V.

[10] See Chapter Twelve, p. 315.

241 785 indeed Lepchas have no word for 'virgin' and either have to say 'clean' or else directly 'a person who has not copulated.' They claim that this insistence on virginity in connection with the objects of sacrifice for the people of Mayel is a custom derived from their father's fathers; if the special bird were not killed and if the killer and the *chi*-pourer were not virgins the gods would be angry and the harvest spoiled. But, as so often in Lepcha life, theory and practice do not necessarily coincide; young children [781] are chosen to fill the rôles who it is hoped are virgin; if not—*ket ma-nin*: it doesn't matter.

•776 The people of Mayel consist of seven brothers each with their own name and each patron of some sort of grain. These seven brothers are the progenitors and ancestors and guardians of the Lepchas. They were created by Itpomu who placed rice and millet and maize in their charge when she made these crops. The people of Mayel live in seven huts; they are immortal; each morning they are infants, at midday they are grown men and in the evening they are old. They all have huge goitres and it is from them that people know that big goitres are a sign of prosperity and a large harvest. They wear the traditional Lepcha costume of clothes made of nettle cloth and small basket-work hats. They are somewhere between the gods and ordinary human beings; they are not gods because they live on earth but they are not human because they do not die. The land of Mayel is far up the Talung valley, somewhere behind Kinchenjunga; at one time in the past the road thither was open but now it has been closed and is as unpassable as the cutting edge of a knife. On the road to Mayel are three guardian spirits called Sok-po, who are brothers; the eldest is called Mayel Yook *rum*; he is also called Pong *rum* when hunters sacrifice to him; his younger brothers Mi-tik and Tom-tik are cruel deities who kill and eat men and animals; Tom-tik is like a bear. They are the special guardians of the ibex and musk deer which come from Mayel, which is the reason why these animals are so difficult to kill.

In the country of Mayel crops grow a hundred times as big as here and it is from that country that the seeds of our present crops originate. These crops are always ripe for harvesting. The migratory birds are called Mayel *fo*, birds of Mayel, and they are sent out by the people of Mayel to the Lepchas to indicate the seasons and the times when the various agricultural acts should be performed. When the time comes for the migratory birds to return to Mayel the parent birds die on the way and only the newly hatched ones survive the arduous journey to Mayel from whence they are sent the next year to act as indicators for the Lepchas. The people of Mayel have no wives living with them but the two oldest of the people, Adoo Yook and Alau Yook, have in a way as wives the two sisters called Talyeu Nimu and Sangvo Nimu, who are the spirits of the earth; these two women lie on their backs under the earth and on their bellies are the cultivatable lands; into this Adoo Yook and Alau Yook send rice and millet and maize, just as if it were human seed from a husband, and the women are fertilised and fruitful.

In the old days the path to Mayel was open and sometimes the people of Mayel used to come into the other parts of the world and occasionally adventurous hunters found their way into the Mayel country. Thus the people of Mayel helped to build the palace of Fyung Di near Pemionchi where the Kings of Sikkim lived before the war against the Nepali. While they were building the palace they ate and talked like ordinary people; but when, after its completion, people were accompanying them home, the people of Mayel walked and talked with them as far as a certain mountain and then disappeared in a clap of thunder. Old people also say that in the spring the people of Mayel go into Tibet, either to Lhassa, or to Yambo Zikchu, where they sell pumpkins and cucumbers and egg-plants and chillies. When the Maharajah was living at Chumbi some old Lepchas accompanied him there and saw the people of Mayel selling these plants; the rest of the suite being Sikkimese and Tibetans did not recognise them but the Lepchas naturally did so immediately; as soon as they were recognised the people of Mayel disappeared; as it was nobody knew whence they came or whither they were going.

About six generations ago two people found their way into the Mayel country. One of these was Jiroong's ancestor who was hunting and went past Sakhyong and over two distant peaks; there he saw floating in a stream a branch of a certain sort of tree which he realised must have been thrown there by the people of Mayel and he followed the stream up. He reached a path as narrow as a razor edge on which were the feathers of the Mayel birds which had died on the return journey. After passing this ridge the hunter followed the road for three days round the mountain and came to the village of Mayel and there saw seven houses and asked for shelter for the night. They had big pigs lying down and they killed a pig and gave him pork to eat and rice and *chi.* The hunter

776 stayed there seven days and when he went away the people of Mayel asked him not to talk about them when he returned; and they gave him as gifts rice seed which he sowed and the fruit of pumpkin and cucumber which turned into stone.

Another hunter from Sakhyong also found his way there but he was not so fortunate. When he came to the village he found a child and asked him 'Who are your father and mother?' The child said 'We are our own fathers and mothers, we are babies and young people and old people'. The man then picked and cooked some rice. When the people came near he threatened them with his knife. At this they said to him 'Do not do that; cook and eat your rice and go away. If you do not we will drive you away with our dogs'. When they said that he looked round and saw huge dogs like bears with enormous eyes. Then he was very frightened and ran away at once with some of the cooked rice in his hand. As he ran home there was a terrific thunderstorm, and he was pelted with snow and hail. Since the time of these adventurous travellers the road has been closed with an enormous rock.

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241 The people of Mayel are worshipped exclusively in connection with the crops of dry rice, millet and maize; on all other occasions they are markedly excluded from the long lists of supernaturals who are called on to partake of the sacrifices and give their blessings. Everybody must worship them on two occasions, after the completion of sowing and at the harvesting of the dry rice; in those houses where there is a Mun or a knowledgeable old man they are also prayed to in the winter to keep away snow and hail, in the spring to protect young crops, and, after the sowing of each of their grains, they are offered *sakyou faat* to ensure a good harvest. Only the three crops are connected with the people of Mayel; the others come from different supernaturals. Barley, wheat, buckwheat and wet rice come from Kongsen-bu, the God of Kinchenjunga, a Sikkimese deity; no important ceremonies are connected with these crops. Cardamum, as has already been said[2] comes from Nepal and is under the patronage of the foreign Elaiji-*nyou*, who dislikes women, in particular menstruating women. The people of Mayel are said to share this dislike, and should a menstruating woman visit them there would be the terrible result that all the

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[2] See Chapter Three, p. 92.

857 The only times she appeared happy were when somebody would give her a baby to nurse. She was always begging mothers to let her hold their children; the request was comparatively seldom granted; when it was she was completely happy for a few minutes. The adults thought my playing with children, or indeed taking any notice of them, extremely eccentric; they were, however, quite amiable about it.

869 776 [861] 152 Even before they attain to physical independence Lepcha children know about devils, and nearly all their fears are centred round them. They are quite unscrupulously threatened with devils whenever they are naughty. The bogies which particularly frighten children depend partly on individual choice and partly on the emphasis given by elders. The childish ghost-devil num-een *moong* is feared by all children, and a great number claim to have heard it moaning; other favourite bogies are Tong-ryong *moong*, who looks like a tiger and runs after and kills people, Mi-toor, the unkillable dog, and other theriomorphic devils. As far as I can make out these fears are not obsessive; for one thing they are shared by every member of the community, and hand-in-hand with the idea of devils is learnt the capacity of the priests of the two religions to deal with them. The idea of devils is most frightening if a child is alone in the forest by day, or alone in the house by night; everybody is rather frightened of devils in the forest after nightfall. It very rarely happens that a child is left alone at night; and children are not frightened of the dark in their own homes (except sometimes very young ones) for they always sleep in practically complete darkness. If a child alone in the forest thinks he sees or hears a devil his only course is to run home as soon as possible.

Open fear of devils is considered a childish trait, and a person claiming to be considered as an adult will deny fearing them any more. The chief sign of a child overcoming what is considered to be its excessive fear of devils is when it voluntarily throws away its necklace with the attached snail-shells and sloughed navel-string which acts as a sort of amulet. No pressure is put upon children either to make them retain the necklace or to throw it away. Chudo's eldest daughter, aged seven, who had had her sickle several years, still wore her necklace, while her four-year-old younger brother had already thrown his away.

When I asked fourteen-year-old Chimpet if he was frightened of devils he shouted ' No ' in a very loud voice; if he saw one, he said, he would throw stones at it and drive it away. He admitted

that when he was younger he had been a little frightened; nowadays 869
if his baby sisters cry he tells them that a devil will come and take
them, and they stop at once. By the house of his lamaist instructor 776
at Purfong there was a big tree which was the home of Jamfi *moong*. 152
One evening this devil leant over the roof of the house, black and
high as the sky; his teacher burnt a bunch of herbs and smoked a
cigarette at it, whereupon it took itself off to the forest, whistling
as it went. The visit of this devil did not produce any untoward
results, but Chimpet admitted that at the time he was a little
frightened.

Besides devils most children are frightened of houses in which 152
there has been a recent death and of burial- or burning-places, and
will usually run past them as quickly as they can. This fear persists
as a motive for panic longer than the fear of meeting incarnated
devils; thus twenty-two-year-old Rigya, after saying that as a
child he used to run away from such places, later admitted that it
was only in the last year that he was able to walk by them at an
ordinary pace. Nearly all adults have a certain fear of devils when
alone in the deep forest or on high mountains; and alone in the
forest everybody is frightened of snakes and wild beasts; but these
fears are perfectly rational; people are still occasionally poisoned
by snakes and mauled by bears.

It sometimes happens that smaller children will be bullied by older 865
ones; but this is rare, and if it does occur the children will be rescued
either by their parents or elder brothers or by any adults present
and the bullies will be well punished. As with other Lepcha
relationships, love between siblings is not considered automatic;
it is usual however, and there is a cultural expectation that elder
brothers and sisters will instruct, help and protect their younger
siblings who out of gratitude will love them in return.

Those children who are going to become lamas usually start to
learn to read about the age of twelve; but here too there is no
definite rule, and instruction may start three or four years earlier
or later. Lepchas under instruction appear to regard their lessons
as an unpleasant piece of extra work, only made tolerable by the
hope of easy gain in the future. Except for future lamas or carpenters
Lepchas appear to have finished most of their formal education
by about the age of twelve. Children of that age could usually [824]
identify for me as many plants and trees as their elders; children
under ten usually knew very few.

Very few children have an alternative home to go to if they feel 591

000 "The Congress, which has refused office in six provinces where the party is in a position to form Ministries, observed a *hartal* to mark the inauguration of autonomy in the provinces.

"The *hartal* was observed in Calcutta by the closing of Hindu shops. A small minority of Moslem-owned shops were also closed.

"Public services continued as usual, but schools and offices under the control of the Calcutta Corporation were closed. No disturbances have been reported."

* * * * *

782 At almost the very moment when the Governor of Bengal
787 was administering the oath to his newly-appointed Ministers,
789 an old Lepcha woman was squatting on the ground in a
remote valley in Sikkim, with an egg pressed against her
forehead. This was the day of the *Cherim* ceremony, which is
observed all over Sikkim twice in every year: once now, and
again at the beginning of the winter. Its purpose is to find
out what sickness is likely to trouble the village during the
next few months and, since the Lepchas like to get as much
benefit as possible out of any one celebration, also to keep
[887] away hail. Kahlyeu, a gentle old man of nearly eighty, had
previously made a rough altar of the branches of trees. It
[133] faced up the valley in full sight of Kinchinjunga, the summit
[487] of which is only twenty miles away as the crow flies, but for
poor toiling man a journey of many painful days along the
[137] roughest of paths, and through thick rhododendron forest, to
787 the lower slopes alone. On his roughly constructed altar
789 Kahlyeu now put a large brass tray in which were seven
778 cones of butter, four eggs (some said it should have been
782 three), one rupee, three small butter-lamps and a Tibetan
[285 ceremonial scarf. The tray was placed on top of a plaited
415] bamboo winnowing-tray, on which was spread a piece of red
cotton cloth. All this was an offering to the spirits who dwell
[776] in the mountain, which the local people know only as
Konchen. Before the eggs were placed in position Pom-ri,
the old woman who was making the offering, placed each in

CHAPTER 5

LAMAISM: MONKS AND NUNS

TO the ignorant Lepcha the world is peopled by 776
spirits; evil spirits known as *Mung*, and good spirits
known as *Rum*, or gods. It is difficult sometimes to
decide whether a particular spirit is devil or god; for while a
Mung is always evil, a Rum, if angered, will appear in a
malicious guise and may then be referred to as a demon.
Every happening in the material world is due to the influence of spirits. Devils cause sickness, bad harvests, and
every other kind of misfortune: but provided they are
appeased by means of the correct sacrifices their evil can be
averted, and on occasions they may even be induced to
further some particular project, such as causing the death of
an enemy, or winning the heart of some apparently stony-hearted woman. Some earlier writers have described the
Lepchas as animists, but I believe this idea to be mistaken.
Animism implies the attribution of a living soul to inanimate 774
objects and natural phenomena; but the Lepcha has not this
belief. According to his ideas, trees, rivers, rocks and other
natural objects are only the homes of spirits; but as such they
must be treated with proper respect. The objects themselves,
however, while they are sometimes thought to possess a
separate soul, do not need to be propitiated. When a house, 774
for instance, is being built, a sacrifice will be made when the 782
trees are felled from which it is to be constructed. This
sacrifice, however, is offered not to the spirits considered to
be inherent in the trees themselves, but to compensate for
any annoyance which might be caused to spirits living in
them, and also as a general expiation for the sin of taking
life; for trees, being living things, are thought to have
separate souls of their own. This last is only a minor

and has not yet reached the age of puberty. In spite of this, 159
however, he[1] is well aware of the facts of life, and a few years [864]
ago was seduced by his uncle's wife, a woman of thirty, with
whom he is still on intimate terms.

Tafoor's second child is a girl, and although three years 159
younger than Chimpet she looks much older. She already 866
nurses the two younger children, and knows how to cook,
and is perfectly capable, so her father tells me, of running the
house. No arrangements have so far been made for her
marriage, but Tafoor hopes to hear of a suitable partner
during the course of the next few years.

* * * * *

Chodo is Tafoor's younger brother, and so far has only 159
reached the rank of *Ka-Ne*. He was thirty this year and his [582]
wife, whom he married some ten years ago, is the same age.
He told me that when he was about five or six he used to play [857
at making little houses out of sticks and leaves; also he was 776]
fond of playing with swings, but his parents would not let him
do this in summer-time because, so they said, the demons
would mistake him for fruit.* As a child he was frightened of
devils and did not like walking about alone at night; and
even now he does not like going by himself in the forest after
dark. When he is alone and feels frightened he prays all the
time to Gūru Rimpoche to keep him safe. He never carries a [778]
charm "like ignorant people," because if he did this Guru
Rimpoche would think he had no faith in his prayers and
would therefore do nothing to help him. He knows that his
wife has relations with Chimpet but does not mind in the
least: "unless one learns, how can one ever be proficient?" [834
He did the same thing himself as a boy; and even now 864]
frequently goes to the forest with Tafoor's wife, with whom
he is of course legally entitled to cohabit. As a child he was
sent to school at Mangen but only read the first three books.
After this he spent a year in the Maharaja's palace in

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* Fruit, as it swings in the breeze, is thought to be plucked by passing devils. Cf. *The Golden Bough*.

[1] [i.e., Chimpet, the son of Tafoor, an Unzet. - Analyst]

next time you find yourself dining with a vegetarian 159
teetotaller! When anyone inherits poison it cannot be 754
thrown away or its special guardian, the demon Sung-Mu- [776]
Panden-Hla-Mo, would revenge itself on the person who did
this. Also if the holder of poison can find no use for it [682
within a reasonable time it should be used to kill off one's 673]
own relations: to this there is no moral objection. Karma
Karbari, who gave me this information, believes that his
wife was poisoned by Hlatam, for once she drank *chi* at her
house; and died three months later. She commenced by [753]
spitting blood. This passed and was followed by dysentery:
hæmorrhages followed, and finally her teeth turned black
and cracked. This was soon followed by death. Once a
very old and learned Lama came to the village on pilgrimage,
and on seeing Hlatam he at once told her to get away from
him, as he could see that she was evil. Hlatam does not kill [776]
people deliberately; but because she owns poison she cannot
help herself, and is in the power of its demon. Before she
dies she will hand it over to her son, when he too will then
be forced to use it. At one time people were so afraid of this
old woman that she was driven out of the village by Tafoor's
father, when he was Mukhtiyar of the district. It was
believed that she always carried the poison on her person,
and for this reason he followed her to the fields and completely
stripped her; but he did not find anything. It was
shortly after this that she decided to join the Church. Tafoor
says that he does not entirely believe the story, but, all the
same, if he is ever called to Hlatam's house he will certainly
hold her responsible for any subsequent illness, and will take
his revenge accordingly. The Mandal, too, confirms the
story and says that he was present when Tafoor's father
searched her. He does not, however, believe that she really
does own poison, and thinks it wrong that the poor old
woman should be so maligned.

* * * * *

While we were talking of Hlatam, Karma suddenly 159 753

three days to tell. Gongyop was very anxious that we should 756
write it down; but the flesh was not sufficiently strong! At
the end of his third year an ox was sacrificed, and his teacher
pronounced him as fit, although he has still a number of
things to learn. He cannot, for instance, do the *Sanglion*, a
special rite performed at death. He thinks it a curse to be a
Mun, and hopes his son will never have to be one. In his
opinion a Lama is more powerful than a Mun; but the latter
is probably more efficient when it is a question of merely
driving demons away.

I asked Gongyop if the Padim god was angry when he 756
became a Mun. "No," he said, "the two gods are husband 776
and wife, and the Padim god was glad because the Mun had
come to share houses (i.e. Gongyop's body) with him. The
Padim god does not call his wife, but is naturally glad when
she arrives." The spirits are not always present in his body.
When they come he feels a heavy burden, as though he is
carrying an immense weight. These particular gods normally
live in a place on the other side of Kinchinjunga, which
mountain they have to cross to reach him. At the time of
their arrival he feels a weight pressing him down. When they
are in possession of his body he is able to prophesy. At such 756
times he does not know what he is saying, nor has he after- 787
wards any recollection. He cannot call the spirits up at will 776
and only prophesies twice a year: once in summer and again
in winter. He generally feels ill the evening before, and only
becomes normal again from cock-crow on the morning
following the "possession." He feels heavy and depressed;
also he cannot stand noise. He trembles all the time and
sweats profusely. During this time he must pray to the gods
to find out what must be done. He has no particular feelings
at the time of possession; but at the moment when the
spirits actually enter his body everything goes black in front
of him, after which he remembers no more. He sits cross-
legged on the floor making offerings; by his side is a necklace
of flowers and a decorated stick known as *Sagyi-patung*.
Suddenly he feels as though he is being poked all over with

756 787 ● 776 the stick: this is the god arriving to take possession of his body. He is now no longer himself. The god takes up the necklace and puts it on its head. It gets up trembling and goes outside the house, where it walks up and down a few times. It comes in again and sits down in its former place. Everyone keeps very quiet and still; even the children make no noise. It offers *chi* and chants a little. Now it blows on everyone. Very quietly, it begins to speak. Soon, darkness comes over it, and it steals away. The god is gone, having made its prophecy. Gongyop recovers consciousness. Later, the others will tell him what the god has said.

756 782 A Mun offers sacrifices to Itpumu, who, as we have already seen, was the creator of all things, even of Lamas. The god cannot be approached direct, but only through the medium of his demon children. It sometimes happens that the twice-yearly ceremony, when prophecies are made, is performed by more than one Mun in each village: but even when this is done it is said that their prophecies do not differ in essentials; and apparently no steps are taken to prevent collusion. We were unfortunate not to witness one of these ceremonies; but from what little I have seen I think it is exceedingly doubtful if a real state of trance is ever induced. One or two people were openly sceptical, and said that the prophecies were made in such a low and indistinct voice that it was possible to interpret them almost as one wished: others, however, were reticent. There seems no doubt, however, that they are always confined to generalisations: "although the village is suffering from coughs and colds at present, there is no immediate danger, and the epidemic will shortly cease." Things such as this were commonly said, but they can hardly be called prophetic; and in the meantime I prefer to keep an open mind until such time as I have collected evidence which would be accepted by a scientist.

756 787 Gongyop says that during ordinary ceremonies, when no god has taken possession of his body, he sometimes sees phantom dogs, pigs, or monkeys coming into the room. If he looks carefully they disappear at once; but the moment he

concentrates on the service they appear again immediately. 756
If one of these animals comes right into the room and is seen 787
to be eating something it is a sure sign that the sick person
will die. He does not tell the patient what he has seen, but
merely contents himself with saying that the illness is serious
and that the ceremony may not be completely successful. If
he sees a pig it means that Lum Dong Mung is the cause of [776]
the trouble: if a red butterfly, then it is Arot Mung to whom
offerings must be made. This last is the demon which causes
people to commit suicide, and requires careful handling.
Sometimes he will appear to see a dirty and aged woman
enter the room: this is Sor Mung, which causes coughs and
colds.

It is generally believed that Lepchas know a great deal 824
about the medicinal value of plants. In the days when they 756
were dependent upon forest produce this was probably true,
but it certainly does not apply at the present day. One
would have expected knowledge of this kind to be handed
down from generation to generation, and to find it part of the
stock-in-trade of the Mun. His cures, however, are obtained
entirely by means of sacrifices. He gives no medicine, nor [751]
does he prescribe the wearing of charms and amulets, the
making of these being the province of the Lamas.

For ordinary divinations a Mun uses either a necklace or 756
an egg. The egg is placed against the forehead, and the eyes 787
are closed. Gongyop says that when he does this it helps him
to concentrate. At one ceremony at which we were present
he said that by means of the egg he could see a long
straight road, continuing into the distance. This meant
illness in the near future; but nothing very serious. On
another occasion he saw a circular road: this meant serious
illness. And once, when he saw a circular road which was [164]
arranged in the form of a knot, several people died of
dysentery shortly after.

We noticed that he was wearing a rosary twined around his
wrist. We asked him what it was for, but at first he seemed
very embarrassed, and would say nothing about it. Later on,

755 751 one of the demons of quarrels. To get rid of Tumsi a paper [531] must be prepared with its picture stamped upon it. This is to be surrounded by thirteen crossed sticks, representing arrows, since this Mung also causes wars.

After dreaming of a red ox the patient will sweat profusely, and may also have pain in the legs. She should not keep pigs; nor should she buy any blue-coloured cloth. She must buy neither goat nor ox; nor must she sit near a big tree. The flesh of red oxen must be eschewed.

● [776] There is also trouble from Hlamin Jimen, who is a god when pleased and a demon when angry. This has imprisoned the patient's soul and put a fence round it, so that for the time being it is not free to wander. The soul is at present living in some place that is neither heaven nor earth, but is [578] between the two. This trouble has come from some other person's enmity, and was probably caused by domestic animals straying into that person's fields and damaging the crops. A death of some sort is indicated; but it will not necessarily be the patient herself. The remedy for this particular difficulty is the carrying out of the *Deut Shagyur Kyok* ceremony. The patient also appears to be restless and cannot bear the smell of high meat; but this can be easily put right by means of the *Chimbu Klong* ceremony.

It is advisable also to carry out the *Dembu Sun* ceremony as soon as possible or the patient may become seriously ill. A good harvest is indicated and the family will be prosperous.

A cause of minor trouble is the antagonism existing between the "year-signs" of husband and wife. For this reason there is, for instance, trouble from Chumen Mung and Leut Dusain. Matsong Rum and Leut Sabdong may also cause some worry. The patient is likely to dream of a broken-down house and a stream: also she may suffer from vomiting. She should not use black thread; neither should she wear any black clothing or purchase anything black. She should take no food offered by people who live at a distance, even though they be her relatives. It is advisable to arrange for Lamas to read the *Tuncheu* as soon as

possible*; and it might be a good thing to have a figure of a *Gedo* 751
made and abandoned on the path. *Shemen Kyop* should certainly 755
be done, in the near future, since this is clearly indicated. This consists in taking a picture of Tumsi and stuffing it inside the skull of a rat together with twelve small pieces of wood, to represent arrows, tied round it. This is then to be taken out and buried in the ground at the junction of two paths.

The following additional information was added for the benefit of Chano's child. 755

The child should not go to any house where people are quar- 751
relling, and should particularly avoid places where corpses 784
are being burnt: nor should she mix with people of low cast, [564]
such as Blacksmiths or Musicians! For the next few months she should also attend no wedding. She will be troubled
by Mutnyam Chen, a demon which causes shooting pains, [776]
shortness of breath, and pains in the heart. The left shoulder will be particularly painful. She should not be present at the time cattle or bows and arrows are purchased; nor should she eat the flesh of any diseased animal. It would be better also not to allow her to play with knives. The reading of the following books will undoubtedly be beneficial: *Numchiya; Tukzung*; *Chozum; Numsa Numget; Chunjet*, and any others available.

The *Chenmo* ceremony also appears to be indicated, for [782]
which a bundle composed of a monkey's head, dog's head, 751
and a piece of iron is necessary. The child will always be 755
in some danger of dying, and the same may be said of its mother! At the present moment demons and gods are quarrelling amongst themselves for mastery of the child's body; and if the demons win she will surely die. For this reason good treatment is essential, or the child may suffer unnecessarily. If she lives until after November she will in

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* The reading of books is very commonly prescribed, especially in Tibet. In order to get through the several bulky volumes within a reasonable time it is usual to call in a number of Lamas, each of whom reads aloud, but all at the same time, a different book or chapter for the benefit of the person concerned. This idea might well be incorporated into Western medicine: an order to read, for instance, the whole of *Chambers's Encyclopædia* might have a most salutary effect; provided, of course, that the patient did not hire others to do it for him!

796 and the washed entrails, together with a bowl of the animal'
blood, were now brought and placed on the ground in fron
of the altar. The three celebrants turned again towards th
mountain and offered the meat to Konchen, after which i
was taken away and divided up among all present by th
Mandal. While the chanting was still in progress a child wa
[865] making rather a noise close by, whereupon the female helper
in a harsh voice, tóld it to stop: it obeyed at once.

796 It was now about two o'clock; but since early mornin
778 several Lamas had been busily engaged in the preparation o
a large nine-decker *Deu*. The Deu is an elaborate form o
Tay, and its function is the same as that already described fo
the latter. This particular one was built up on a piece o
bamboo some ten feet in length, and was decorated wit
white, blue, yellow, and red thread, and later ornamente
with tufts of white and magenta wool. It was meant as
● [776] house for the Mung called Dayom Pano, one of the man
special devils of illness. It was not completed until abou
four o'clock, and by this time other men had constructed y
another altar, facing down the valley. At the same time
sort of stretcher was made. This was constructed of bambo
and ferns, and a platform of hard rammed earth was place
in the centre of it. A little powdered millet was now scattere
over the earthen centre, while Lamas kneaded dough
millet and buckwheat. Tafoor now took a handful of th
dough and fashioned it roughly into the shape of a tige
which was later given white powder eyes and black eyebal
made from charcoal. This was impaled on a thin bambo
sliver, which had been fixed in the centre of the earthen bas
A female figure was now made of dough and placed astric
the tiger. This is called *Gedo*. Its head was covered in sma
stringy pieces of paste, said to represent serpents, whic
streamed down over the shoulders like hair. Many sma
dough *Tormas* were also made, and placed all round th
central figure, each being stamped with a design which was
replica of the *Gedo* itself. These *Tormas* represent the servan
of the figure, and are called *Diget*. To them were now add

play; and a father will want his son to work in the fields." [368]

When a man starts to hunt he must on no account eat any of the flesh of the first hundred animals he kills, unless by any chance he shoots them with a gun, in which case it does not matter. After killing a hundred animals the hunter will [826] find that he has acquired a slight hollow in his right shoulder-blade; and when this appears it is an indication that he need no longer observe this prohibition, the disregard of which is [753] thought to cause body sores and even leprosy. In the meantime the young hunter will hand his game over to friends and relations, who in return will give him chickens and eggs.

Pong Rum is the master of all animals, and for this reason [776] he is the patron saint of hunters. Once every year, generally [782] in October, all hunters make a sacrifice to this god. Parched rice, *chi*, fish, wild birds' flesh, ginger, arum, sugar-cane, banana, and some sticks of wormwood are offered to the god, and it is important that no woman should take any part in their preparation: nor, if possible, should she even know that they are being got ready, or the hunter will have no luck during the forthcoming year. There is no actual ceremony, the hunter merely taking all these articles and depositing them in some place in the forest where the god will see them.

In addition to this annual sacrifice, every time a hunter kills an animal or bird it is usual to singe its entrails and leave them as an offering to Pong Rum. Whenever a wild animal or bird is killed the god is always present and can be heard; he sounds like a stone whistling through the trees. As soon as this noise is heard the hunter will put the animal on the ground and offer it to the god, speaking very slowly and distinctly; but he leaves only the burned entrails behind. On his return home he should take care that no woman sees the animal's head, or it means that he will be unlucky next time he goes out hunting.

A man who goes in for hunting bears makes a kind of bamboo spring, which he fastens into a tree. If the bear treads on this it is at once precipitated into a pit below,

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Masked Lama dressed to represent the god Kuvera, the embodiment of Kinchinjunga.

[facing p. 275]

774 changes at the moment of death into a spirit, named *Mŭk nyam*; this
775 change itself is termed *Hyit*. The *A pil* is said to get scared very
easily and when frightened can even leave the body; the separation
[761] of the soul from the body results however in the instantaneous death
of the human being. To protect small children from this danger,
[751] mothers often fasten round the neck or armwrist of the child a string
with a snail shell on it, "as refuge for the soul".[10]

753 Illness and death are attributed by the Lepchas to a number of
761 malignant demons who have to be propitiated by various ceremonies,
in order to prevent their attacks or to rescue a victim from their
776 influence. Among the host of these evil supernaturals, whose names and spheres of influence vary with the traditions of the different parts of the Lepcha land, there are some who are believed to be especially dangerous as they do not satisfy their greed by harming people through illness, but who try either to eat man's flesh or to destroy his soul. A few of these supernatural beings, as *Sang grong mung*, *Dŭt mung* and his wife *Sŭ mo mung*, etc. who seem to have been at one time widely known and feared among the Lepchas, are believed to have vanished since man started clearing the jungle and to settle even in the remotest parts of Sikkīm.

776 *Sang grong mung* and his wife,—the supernaturals of the Lepchas mostly appear in pairs—are said to have been half men and half apes. Their abode were deep, dark caverns in the hills. They lived on human flesh and to satisfy their hunger they often tried to get people into their power by offering them presents. The person, who had met the *Sang grong mung* or his consort, had no other choice than to accept the gift; however, he had to take it with the back of his hands and not with the palms as customary, otherwise his life was lost.

Dŭt mung and his wife *Sŭ mo mung*—who was always accompanied by her servant *Sŭ mo thor*—had children and they lived in a house, just like men. Their hunting ground was the jungle, where they killed lonely travellers and ate their flesh. *Sŭ mo mung*, who was an ugly ogre with long matted hair and emaciated breasts, is said to have been very fond of seducing young men. To achieve her aim, she could change herself—by brushing her hair back and rubbing her body—into a lovely girl. She induced her victim, to follow her to her house, where she killed and devoured him; but sometimes, if she liked the man, she kept him with her for some time, hiding him from her jealous husband.

776 Another demon, frequently held responsible for the death of a
person, is *Mă zóm mung*, who is said to appear in the form of a huge
764 black dog with ferociously gleaming eyes and a flaming mouth. To

prevent this evil spirit from returning to a house, where he had just 776
caused a death, the mourners on their way back from the funeral put 764
hedges of thorns across the road, to prevent *Mă zóm mung* from following them. In some localities it is the custom to scare *Mă zóm mung* away by heating during the night after the funeral three huge stones on the hearth. The stones are later brought into the open and somebody of those present calls the name of this demon, asking him to come and eat some meat. The demon, who is believed to be very greedy, comes immediately and tries to swallow the stones, but he burns himself badly and runs away.

Shom mung is a malignant spirit, who causes people to commit 776
suicide or murder. He creeps close to a man from the back and then 761
suddenly enters his mind and taking possession of his victim, forces
him ultimately to commit the evil deed. This demon is also held 828
responsible for all accidental death.

A soul, which was captured by *Shom mung*, is unable to proceed 776
to the other world unless it had been freed by a *Mŭn* from the power
of the evil spirit. To perform this ceremony, a *Mŭn* has to come in 764
the evening after the funeral to the victim's house. On this occasion, 775
the *Mŭn* is wearing a red dress, with a head-band of the same colour. At the beginning of the ceremony, an animal is killed and its blood collected in a big, flat vessel in order to attract the bloodthirsty spirit. The *Mŭn* then takes her place in front of this vessel and goes into a trance. After some time she suddenly declares that *Shom mung* has entered the container and she throws now into the blood a grass whisk, which she had held ready in her right hand. Leaving the whisk in the vessel —"to keep the demon down"—she grasps a flat stick made from *Nyol kung*[11] wood, which is lying at her right side, and begins to beat frantically the surface of the blood pool, in order to "kill the demon". All those present, shouting and screaming, join her in this beginning, using sticks, stones and knives as weapons. After a while, the *Mŭn* takes the vessel outside the house and pours its contents into a hole, which had been dug previously in the compound, and then all weapons which were used during the ceremony, are also thrown into the pit, which is quickly closed. Only when this ceremony had been performed for somebody, who had fallen victim to *Shom mung*, can his *Mŭk nyam* be guided afterwards in the usual way to the *Rŭm lyang*. It is believed, that unless *Shom mung* is killed, he will become attached to the family which had omitted the rite just described, and he will kill its members one by one.

Another pair of dangerous supernaturals are the demon *Thing* 776
mung and his wife *Nyo mung*, who are able to bring a man's life

to an end by cutting his "thread of life".

776 There are however also some spirits, who guard people against the attacks of malignant demons. Among these benevolent supernatural beings, the *A bo a mo sǎ rŭm*, who protect the family and who transfer their protective power from one generation to the other, and *Mŭn kung*, the guardian spirit of life, should be mentioned.

775 At the moment of death, soul and body, as the Lepchas believe, separate and the soul leaves its temporary abode. At first it lingers in the room for some time, watching the lifeless body. But later, feeling very light as it is not kept down anymore by the heavy human form, it leaves the room and strolls further and further away from the house. It goes now to all the places, which the deceased had visited during his lifetime, and it tries to speak to people it meets on the road, but nobody can hear or see the roaming soul. If no appropriate measures are taken, it might get friendly with the demons and induced by them, can return and start harming people. 764 To prevent this, a *Bong thing* or *Mŭn*[12] have to be called, to say the necessary prayers and invocations. The prayers start with an admonition to the deceased to realize, that his life has now come to an end and that he is not among the living anymore.

[784] When performing this rite or any other funeral ceremony, a *Mŭn* has to be very careful not to touch the corpse and also not to take any food in front of the dead, otherwise she would be afflicted by a severe illness. There are however no such restrictions for the *Bong thing*. If no Lepcha sorcerer is to be found in the neighbourhood, anybody who knows the necessary prayers may be called into the house. Also in case that a *Bong thing* or a *Mŭn* died, this rite has to be performed, only in a more elaborate manner.

Those funeral ceremonies of the Lepchas,[13] which had to be carried out at daytime, were called *Sŭng bam*, while those which took place at night were termed *Sŭng lyon*. The cost of these rites was considerable and thus it occured frequently that people had to sell or pawn some of the family property in order to fulfil their duty towards the dead.

When preparing the corpse for the funeral, all jewellery as earrings and rings had to be removed and then the body was washed with lukewarm water ; to use cold water was not customary, as "during lifetime, one would also not offer cold water for washing". Later the body was smeared with some herbs and dressed in an old, but clean garment. To use a new, unworn dress is a custom, which came into vogue only in more recent times among well-to-do Lepcha families. At last the face of the dead was covered with a white cloth and a coin was placed

796 are some new details on the composition or use of the
thread-cross.

1. THE CHERIM CEREMONY

796 This ceremony, consisting of three parts, takes place
twice a year in honour of the mountain god of Kanchenjunga
● 776 (*Gangs chan mdzod Inga*, "The five glacier treasuries"),
as well as for appeasing evil spirits, to protect the crops from hail and men from diseases. It is partly performed by Mun, partly by lamas, who officiate during the last third of the rite. As a description of the ceremony itself has already been given previously,[21] we shall mention here only the third part of the rite and the form of the thread-cross used herein.

796 This part is performed by the lamas who direct their
sacrifice to all the gods and demons; the main sacrifice
776 is made to the mountain god Kanchenjunga[22] and the
778 "gods of the plains". The essential part of the rite consists
in erecting a *deu*, the construction of which starts some four hours earlier. The *deu* consists of nine storeys, made of blue, red, yellow and white thread.[23] This thread-cross is called *mamoo yam deu*.

796 The Lepcha lamas explain that this structure is erected
to appease the malignant ghost of a Tibetan king, who was
775 called Dayom Panoh, "king Dayom". During his lifetime
778 enemies destroyed his palace and when he died his ghost
started roaming around and harming people out of revenge. The *deu* should provide a nine-storied palace and entice him to return to Tibet.

796 Besides the *deu*, an image of a female supernatural
being, called *mamoo*, is erected. The effigy of the *mamoo*
776 is made out of ground millet and buckwheat dough. The
778 *mamoo* is represented with outstretched hands, riding a
tiger. On her breast she is wearing a necklace, made of butter, while the lower part of her body is covered by a garment, indicated by scratches in the dough. The supernatural being has snakes instead of hair and wears a five-lobed crown, apparently similar to that worn by Tantric lamas.

This image is placed upon a base, formed by covering 796
a bamboo stretcher with earth and braken and superimposing 778
upon it squares of turf, each smaller than the other, with the
grass facing down. The nine-storied *deu* is planted into the
topmost turf immediately behind the figure. On the lower
steps of the base, a great number of cones made of dough
and covered with pieces of coloured cotton is placed. These
cones, called *diget*, represent the servants of the *mamoo*.
On the four corners of the second layer, four *yeu* are planted:
in front in the right-hand corner blue, on the left white,
in the rear left yellow and in the rear right red. In the
topmost layer as well as into the second one, several flat
wooden sticks, called *Tamsing* by the Lepchas, and small
sticks bearing tufts of wool—termed *pong* or *bamgyal*—are
planted. On the lowest step, a wall called *po ryum*, with
a gap in front, is erected around the last turf square.
Opposite this gap, inside the enclosure, four small vessels
containing milk, tea and strained Lepcha beer are placed.
On the right and left outside of the wall, crossed arrows and
spindles are stuck into the base, the arrows being put on the
right, the spindles on the left, when facing the structure.
According to the explanation given by the priests, the [831]
arrows represent the male element, while the spindles stand
for the female. Finally, various flowers are put around the
lowest base.

The ceremony is continued by offering food and various
objects to the *mamoo* and other spirits and then by chanting
of prayers. Towards the evening, when the ceremony comes
to an end, the *deu* with the dough images is carried across
three streams and then thrown away. If the images are
eaten by animals within three days, it is regarded as a sign
that the gods were pleased with the offerings made to them;
if the effigies remain untouched, bad fortune may be expected
in the near future. 177

There are several similarities to be found between this 796
Lepcha rite and old Tibetan religious customs and thoughts. 776
The name of the special thread-cross, *mamoo yam deu*, is 778
derived from Tibetan. Indeed, one of the Tibetan thread-

177 crosses is called *ma mo mDos*, "The thread-cross of the *ma mo*"
and is dedicated to supernatural beings called *ma mo*.
796 This thread-cross seems to be an especially important form,
●776 as there is a special Tibetan book on its construction.
778 The *ma mo's* are represented by Tibetan artists as fierce and
terrifying female demons; they are frequently met with in
Tibetan iconography, where twelve Great *ma mo's* (*ma mo
chhen mo*) accompany Yama (*gShin rje*) as his messengers.[24]
Since the *mamoo* of the Lepchas is also a female deity and
as she has snakes instead of hair and is riding a yawning
tiger, she should be regarded as a malignant spirit, most
probably belonging or at least related to the *ma mo* group
of the Tibetans.

The second syllable in the name of the thread-cross *yam*—seems to correspond to the Tibetan honorific expression for mother, *yum*. This Tibetan word is frequently used in the names of lamaist goddesses and particularly denotes the female consorts or "energies" of Tantric gods. As already mentioned, the word *Deu* corresponds to the Tibetan word *mDos*.

796 It is interesting to note that this thread-cross is nine-
storied, as the number nine is very frequently used in the
778 Bŏn religion, where many of the deities are depicted as nine
801 headed, are placed into groups of nine, etc.[25] The colour
of the thread used for constructing the big *Deu*[26] and espe-
822 cially the colour of the four smaller thread-crosses which
are planted in the four corners of the topmost square is
nearly identical with the colours attributed to the four
main quarters of the world by lamaist traditions: East
white (or brown), South yellow (blue), West blue-green
(red) and North black (yellow).

796 As for the story of the Tibetan king Dayom it was not
possible to find a parallel in Tibetan mythology. But it
775 may be mentioned, that in an old Tibetan record recently
171 made available in a translation by Prof. Tucci, it is said
that the king of the *bDud* demons, called *Mi byams pa khrag
po*, "The merciless with the bloody face", was living in a
black castle with nine storeys or pinacles.[27]

It has already been mentioned that some of the symbo- 796
lism of the Tibetan thread-crosses corresponds to that of the
Buddhist Chotens.[1] In the present case the four steps, 778
formed by the bamboo-bracken fern base and the three 171
squares of turf, correspond to the four steps of a Choten. The Lepcha name for these steps, *bangrim*, is identical with the respective Tibetan expression, *bang rim*.

Several of the other implements used in this ceremony 796
are also well known from ancient Tibetan rites. Thus the
wooden slabs, which are planted into the turf on the side of 171
the main effigy and which are called *tamsing* by the Lepchas, are identical with the Tibetan *khram shing*, already mentioned. As for the *pong* or *bamgyal*—the former word appears to originate from Lepcha, while the latter was derived from Bön terminology—the sticks carrying tufts of wool, we know that wool was used frequently by Bön priests. Thus those *bonpos*, who belonged to a sect called *sNang gshen*, had tufts of wool on their foreheads, while those of the *hPhrul gshen*, sect used coloured thread of wool as their emblem. Adherents of the last mentioned sect are reported as having been especially efficient in the construction of *mDos* and *Yas.*[28]

We find a parallel for the connection between arrows and thread-crosses in a recently published *thang-ka* (painted scroll) of the Mongolian war god. On the lower part of this picture there is a hand, consisting of alternating thread-crosses and arrows.[29] Another similarity is perhaps the use of flowers, as a group of "Bön flowers" is mentioned in Bön scriptures. Finally, the ritual throwing away of the effigies also occurs in an important ancient ceremonies of Bön origin, called *lTo* or *gTo*, in which an effigy, regarded as a scape-goat, (*glud*[30]) is thrown away.

2. CEREMONY FOR KEEPING AWAY ILLNESS

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At the beginning of the rite a basket is filled with earth 778
and on top of it three concentric, decreasing, square turfs 776
are placed. The basket, arranged in this way, is called

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[1] [See cat. 116, p. 67. — Analyst]

796 *rum* by the Lepchas. In the centre of the topmost base
778 a dough image is placed together with a big white *deu*. The
776 image is said to represent the spirit "King Gebu". He is accompanied by four lesser supernatural beings and one minister. All six images are made of rice dough. On the four corners of the square, four Yeu are placed, two white in front, a red and a yellow one in the rear. To each of these four *yeu* two *tamsing* and two *pong* are added, together with a strip imprinted with nine birds. On the step below, nine cones are placed, representing four ministers and five servants. Again, a band with representations of nine land animals is added. On the third storey, a great number of small images, representing male and female spirits, is placed. Into the lowest storey, eight arrows and eight spindles are planted and finally the whole structure is surrounded by various flowers. Later five cups, filled with Lepcha beer, tea and some bitter tasting liquid, are placed in front and several other implements, among them another image made of rice and with butter ornaments, are laid near the main *deu*. After burning incense, the officiating priests pray to the gods, to spare the population from illness.

796 As in the first rite,[1] the number nine plays an important
801 part and we find here again the various objects, which were said to be originally used in the ceremonies of the Bonpos.

3. SACRIFICE TO THE HAIL-DEMON DEBRONG PANOH

796 Debrong Panoh, "King Debrong", is a hail and thunder supernatural being who must be propitiated to prevent
776 hail from ruining the crops. He is pictured as having
778 nine faces, eighteen hands and a thousand eyes. His ritual is similar to that of Gebu Panoh. First a basket, with straw or dry leaves on the bottom, is filled with earth and afterwards again three concentric squares of turf are put on top. In the centre of the topmost square a dough image of Debrong Panoh is placed. This effigy, however, in contrast to the verbal description, has only one head and two hands. It holds a bow and a rope—perhaps the Tibetan

[1] [see cat. 116, p. 72. - Analyst]

ritual snare, *Zhags pa*—in the left hand and an umbrella as 796
well as an arrow in the right. The image of Debrong Panoh 776●
is accompanied by four effigies, representing his four minis-
ters, which are placed in the four corners of the top square. 778
On the second, third and fourth stage stand images of servants and lesser male and female supernatural beings; in front of the altar five cups containing milk, tea and strained Lepcha beer are placed. Finally, all sorts of grain are thrown into the basket and small twigs of various useful fruit trees are set around it. When the first part of the ceremony is finished, two images of Debrong Panoh's parents are made and set on two wooden plates. The image of Debrong Panoh's father is called *chien lut*, that of his mother *looh lut*. Then three pots, filled with tea, milk and strained beer, are put in front of each image and afterwards a white *yeu*, together with two *tamsing* and *pong* is set on the table of Debrong Panoh's father. Likewise, a white *yeu*, again with two *tamsing* and two *pong* is placed upon the tray of the *looh lut*. Then a multi-coloured *deu* is placed on the image of Debrong Panoh itself, as well as four smaller thread-crosses in the four corners of the topmost square. The two *yeu*, which are set in front, are both white, those behind red and blue. Again, each *yeu* is accompanied by two *tamsing* and two sticks with tufts of wool.

Now the basket, containing the main image, is put 796
upon a low table in front of the main structure, while the wooden plates with the images of Debrong Panoh's parents are placed to its right and left sides. Two pots filled with water are added—"for the gods to wash their hands and faces"—and two containers full of rice and again a cup filled with water—"for the gods to drink"—and then some strained Lepcha beer, cooked meat and rice are mixed together in a vessel by the officiating lama. Afterwards, while prayers are chanted to the accompaniment of music of the temple orchestra, offerings of rice and water are thrown out to the gods and finally a path, leading from the basket to the door, is made with powder. When this is finished, the central *deu* is removed from the basket and

796 carried out, while the basket and the two wooden plates are
dragged along the path to the door. Once in the open,
the basket is put in a tree, the *Chien lut* carried away to
some other place and the image of Debrong Panoh's mother
is thrown into the water-fall of a stream.

796 This rite contains some of the Bön elements mentioned
before; further more this thunder and hail demon strongly
●776 resembles the appearance of gods as described by the Bonpos.
Like many of the Bön deities, it is the personification of a
natural phenomenon, depicted in the usual Bonpo manner,
with nine faces and eighteen hands.

755 (5) For exorcising an evil spirit, who is causing an
777 illness, several books must be chanted by a lama and two
deu, called in Lepcha *chemen gedo* and *lumoo gedo* set upon
776 a path. These Lepcha expressions are derived from the
Tibetan terms *mTsho sman rgyal mdos* and *kLu mo rgyal
mdos*, which are applied for two different kinds of thread-crosses, dedicated to certain groups of Nagas (*kLu*).

755 (6) While curing the illness, which had befallen a child,
a horoscope was cast by a lama and it was decided that
787 besides other rites a red thread-cross, called Tsen Deu,
778 should be constructed. This *deu* is doubtlessly identical
171 with a red *mDos* of the Tibetans, the *bTsan mdos* (pronounced *Tsen do*), which is constructed for averting the evil
influence of the red *bTsan* demons.[31]

4. CEREMONY, PERFORMED BY LAMAS AND MUN FOR AVERTING AN ILLNESS

755 After a Mun has sacrificed an ox, some lamas erect
a *torma* and sprinkle consecrated water and then make a
801 tortoise, called *robe* in Lepcha—which corresponds to the
778 Tibetan *Rube*, *Rus sbal*—which is drawn with its belly
upward in powdered rice on a large mat. Afterwards,
a square with various numbers, called *Miwua* (in Tibetan
sMe ba)[32], is inscribed upon the body of the tortoise, in the
following way:

4	9	6
3	5	1
8	2	7

6. THE GYAPCHI KLON CEREMONY

This complicated ceremony is carried out concurrently by lamas and Mun priests in order to free a sick person from the evil influence of certain spirits, the presence of which was recognized by divination. As this rite has already been described elsewhere,[37] only the image used and the various thread-crosses will be described. 755 [787]

During this ceremony, five images are made of buckwheat dough and placed in front of an altar-like structure. Four of the effigies, said to represent male spirits, are depicted alike, that is standing, with raised hands; some scratches in the dough indicate that they are wearing a garment. The names of these four supernatural beings are Chyong moong, Deut moong, Lho moong and Sher moong. Their respective colours, rendered in the same order, are green, red, yellow and white. The fifth image is that of Mamoo moong, a female supernatural being whom we encountered previously. Her image is black and she is portrayed with legs apart, the sexual organs greatly exaggerated. Behind each of the images, a *yeu* of the respective colour is planted, together with two *tamsing* and two sticks with tufts of wool. 755 776 778 [831]

Another image, used in this rite, is called the "house owner". It is surrounded by small butter discs displaying images, impressed with wooden printing blocks (the Tibetan *Zan par*). Some of these depict the supernatural beings who preside over the cycle of twelve years.[38] The image of the "house owner" is connected with one *yeu*, two *tamsing* and two *pong*. The thread-cross used in this case is multicoloured.

7. RITUAL, PERFORMED BY A LAMA TO APPEASE THE FEVER DEVIL DEUT-MOONG

After reading prayers, the lama, using bamboo sticks and blue thread, constructs a thread-cross, which is called *moong-ka deu bitomu*. After placing various sorts of grain, leaves, some fried rice and bread into the *deu*, he makes 782 778 776

782 a small image, which is afterwards connected with the
778 thread-cross. Then the whole structure is offered to Deut-
moong and finally somebody, who was designated by the
776 lama, has to take this offering to a place in the forest where
it is left to be eaten by animals. This ritual also corresponds
[171] to the ancient Tibetan *lTo* rites previously mentioned.^
In this connection it is interesting to note, that also in Tibet
leaves or pieces of paper are placed in the thread-cross,
usually in such a manner as to form the main features of a
face. Occasionally a ceremonial scarf (*Kha btags*) is draped
over the *mDos*.

8. RITE FOR AVERTING INFANTILE DIARHOEA

753 If several children die of infantile diarhoea, it is assumed
that their death was caused by a malignant spirit, called
776 Sande moong. The Lepchas know two ceremonies for
782 appeasing his anger. For the first a black dog is made
778 with a rider on its back and two *yeu*, a black and a white
one are placed upon the dog's head, while a red thread-cross
is planted behind the rider.

782 The second ceremony has already been described else-
778 where.[39] In this ceremony a life-sized cat with a very
long tail is made out of dough. A rider, sitting upon a horse's saddle is placed on its back and four images of men are put in front of and behind the cat. The animal is led by strands of coloured thread, wound around its neck and held by the rider and the images in front. The rider carries a red thread-cross; on the left-front side of the tray a white *Yue* is placed, on the right front a black one, on the right hand rear a white and on the rear left a yellow. To each *Yeu* a *Tamsing* with wool of the same colour as the thread-cross is added.

9. EXORCISM, CALLED DEUT SHAGU KYOB

755
776 For curing a person who has fallen ill through the
influence of an evil spirit called Hlamen Djeme Pum, a

^[See cat.116,p.78.-Analyst]

ceremony—which again corresponds to the Tibetan 755
lTo rites—is performed.¹ An effigy is offered as substitute 776
for the sick man or woman and afterwards carried far away
from the house, in which the invalid lives. During this
ceremony, also various thread-crosses are used. The name 755
of this exorcism is nearly identical with the name of a Tibetan 171
ceremony, called Dushel-gugyur (*bDud zhal dgu hsgyur*),
"transfering the nine-faced *bDud*- demon". A treatise,
composed by the well-known Indo-Tibetan mystic Padmasambhava, describing the performance of this ceremony,
is reported to exist in Tibet.

10. KEEPING AWAY ILLNESS AND DEATH FROM A HOUSE

When divination has revealed that a household is in 751
danger of being attacked by spirits of illness and death, a 776
ceremony called Nambo Sagor must be held by the lamas.
First a dog's skull is hung over the door by means of a rope,
to keep away all diseases which come over the ground.
Then a pig's skull is buried under the fire-place, to keep away
the diseases above it. While this is done, other lamas chant
from books; rice and sacred water are sprinkled and a
torma as well as a *yeu* are made. This ceremony shows a [171]
similarity to the Tibetan rites described by Waddell
which are performed to protect a house from the influence
of the *Sa bdag*.

11. CURING AN ILLNESS BY MEANS OF THE GO SUM RITE

This is a complicated ceremony, concurrently per- 755
formed by lamas and Mun priests, during which a hema- 778
phrodite image with three heads is erected. This effigy 171
has a distinctly Tibetan name: it is called Nagpo Gosum
(in Tibetan spelling *Nag po mgo gsum*), "the black three-headed one". It has two hands and its three heads seen
from left to right, are those of a blue pig, red ox and yellow
tiger. Behind the image, three *Yeu* of the same colour as
the respective heads, are planted, and two *tamsing* are

¹[see cat. 116, p. 78. —Analyst]

755 placed behind the two upraised arms. A cloth, in its shape
778 similar to that worn by dancers in Tibetan religious dances,
is hung upon its shoulders. As a comprehensive description
171 of further details of this image is available elsewhere[40]
we would merely draw notice to the detail that the navel of the effigy is formed by a tortoise with a magic diagram upon its belly. This tortoise was described when speaking about the sacrifice to the hail demon Debrong Panoh. This rite also corresponds to the Tibetan *lTo* ceremonies and is regarded by the Tibetans as being purely of Bonpo origin.

12. KILLING THE MALIGNANT SPIRIT AROT MOONG, WHICH CAUSES VIOLENT DEATH

796 For this ceremony, a big horse and four smaller ones,
all carrying riders on their back are made of millet dough,
778 coloured red. Behind each rider, a red *yeu* together with
pong sticks is planted and the smaller images are then placed into the four corners of a wooden plate, while the bigger image is put into the centre. In front of this a black figure of the *mamoo* is placed, together with an inflated animal's bladder. Other objects used in this ceremony are symbols of the 12 years cycle, four pots containing scrapings of iron, tree tips, poison and water from five rivers and various crops in leaf plates, prickly plants, and again arrows and spindles. The rest of this ceremony is described in
●[776 *Himalayan Village* (p. 352). The four red images of riders
seem to represent spirits, related to or identical with the
171] *bTsan* demons of the Tibetans, who imagine these supernatural beings as ferocious riders of red colour. The red thread-cross would be then the *bTsan mdos* (or *tsen deu* of the Lepchas), as used in rite no 3.

13. THE SHIDOOK KYOB CEREMONY

[764]
796 If it is assumed that a person's death was caused by
776 the demon called Shidook Moong, the ceremony called Shidook
778 Kyob has to be performed. As this rite has already been

^[see cat. 116, p. 78. -Analyst]

described,[3] we will only note here those details, which are 796
of special interest to our subject. Again, a base is made of 776
layers of earth and in the centre of the topmost square a 778
black thread-cross is planted, while in the four corners
four small images together with the same number of *yeu*,
in white, yellow, green and red, are placed. Below, 13 796
other figures together with 13 black thread-crosses, 13 801
knives, 13 sickles and 13 bows and arrows are arranged.
In front of this structure stands a pot with nine handles.
Besides encountering here the number nine, which we already
identified as the most important number of the Bonpos,
we find here the number thirteen mentioned, which is also
regarded as a ritual number of this ancient Tibetan faith.
As for the name of the demon, to whom the ceremony is 796
dedicated, it sounds very similar to the name of the so-called 776
"foundation owners", the *Shidak* (*gZhi bdag*). They are a
group of Tibetan supernatural beings who are supposed 171
to dwell in the earth and when disturbed exercise an evil
influence which might prove fatal to men.

It will be seen from the foregoing, that at the present 796
stage, with the material available for comparison, it is 177
impossible to state whether the Bón elements to be found
incorporated in Lepcha religious ceremonies came from
the original Bón religion, or whether they were introduced
into them through the medium of the Red Hat Sect of
Tibetan Buddhism.

NOTES

1 Spelled *Bon* in Tibetan. About the Bon religion see H. Hoffmann, *Quellen zur Geschichte der tibetischen Bon Religion*, 1950, and the notes given by Prof. G. Tucci in his magnificent new work *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, Rome 1949. For a sketch of this ancieut Tibetan faith see R. Nebesky-Wojkowitz: Die tibetische Bon Religion, Archiv fur Volkerkunde, Vol. II, Vienna 1947, pp. 26-68 (Bibliography). 600

2 The distribution and use of thread-crosses in various parts of the world were described by W. Foy: *Fadensterne und Fadenkreuze*, I. Ethnologica II Leipzig 1913,, and by G. Lindblom: *Thread-crosses* (*Fadenkreuze*), *particularly in South America and Africa*, Ethnos, Vol. V, nos 3-4, Stockholm 1940. 113

3 The main works consulted are:
DAS S. CH. : 'The Bon Religion', *JASB*, Calcutta 1881 (p.196)
SCHLAGINTWEIT, E. : 'Le Bouddhisme au Tibet', *Annales du Musee Guimet*, *Paris* 1881 (Plate XXXVII)

101 tion to the word 'Mother' is interesting, because customs are to be found amongst the
Lepchas which appear to be vestiges of the primitive-social institution of Matriarchy or the
192 mother-ship of clans; whilst this institution still flourishes amongst their co-related tribes
in the neighbouring Garo-hills, who trace their descent through their mothers and not
192 through their fathers. Thus, as apparent vestiges of matriarchy amongst the Lepchas, I
581 find still surviving the usage of female suitorship, in which the young woman proposes
marriage by offering to the man selected a basket of eggs; personal inclination in the
choice of a husband; monogamy as a rule only relaxed in case the wife proves barren,
[551] tribal endogamy, avoidance of girl's mother, and not unfrequent Teknonymy whereby the
father is called after his child — thus the father of Tak-li-ap (*Tak-li-ap bo*). Moreover all
the tribal groups (*a-gyi*), of which there are several scores, bear the affix 'mother'
103 (*mo*)[1], although the proper name in this group title is territorial, the name of a particular
192 valley or glen or hillside; and their grouping is itself merely territorial and has no significance as to marriage or true tribal division. Instances of such groups are 'The Wormwood mother' (*Tak-ñel-mo*), for the locality of this hamlet is exceptionally overgrown with wormwood; 'The Foot mother' (*Sang-dyang-mo*): this hamlet is one of the very few which lies at the *foot* of the tropical forge of the Tista-river; 'the Stockade mother' (*Tung-sung-mo*) this village near Darjiling occupies the site of an old stockade; 'the sloping-field mother' (*Ling-tam-mo*), 'the Namchi mother' (*Nam-tsii-mo*), and thus we also have 'the Darjiling mother' for those born at Darjiling (*Darjeling-mo*). The only group of the tribe,
101 it may be added, which does not bear this affix of 'mother' is the highest section or
192 *A-den-pan-tso*[2]) from which, as its name denotes, the kings (*Pano*) and the ministers (*A-den*)
used to be drawn — now however its members have a preponderating strain of
Tibetan blood.

As instances of others of these archaic words and phrases whose meanings have been
192 forgotten by the Lepchas, but which seem to me to be apparently of a descriptive character, may be cited the words and phrases qualifying 'fields' and 'world', namely '*Ku-ran-min*' and '*so*'. In the former the words literally read 'bosom-stone-below', which would read 'the fields on the bosom of stone underneath.' The prefix *Ku* also is used for 'clothes', with the same meaning as Tibetan '*gö*', (goe) a coat, and *gur*, a tent, in either case would give the sense of 'the fields clothing the bosom of the stones'. Whilst the word joined to 'world' means 'rain' (*so* or *so*, which is literally applicated to the Lepcha part of the world as it is one of the rainiest sites on the globe; but probably it also meant originally the rain of the eyes or *tears*, and was perhaps thus used by the weary toiling Lepcha in the pessimistic sense of 'tearful world'.

[194] The homonymic character of the language also, would suggest the possibility that some of these archaic words are descriptive as in the tonic Chinese and Burmese, such as 'the *flat-thing* plate', 'the *round-thing* bottle' etc. It is to be hoped that this interesting question will be pursued by philologists.

The spirits and deities of the tribe are referred to in these songs, and require a little
● 776 description, as they show the primitive conception of the Lepchas in regard to God, and
the deification of natural objects and of their ancestors. The Lepcha gods and godlings are

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[1] Not *Mung* as stated by Mr. Risley (loc. cit. IV. Appendix 88); this word means 'devil'.
[2] The affix *tso* is interpreted as 'stock or lineage'.

776 very numerous; but none of the many so-called Lepcha deities enumerated by Mr. RISLEY [1]) are Lepcha at all — all of them are purely Tibetan Lamaistic gods of Hindoo type, even to their names. The truly Lepcha divinities, on the contrary, are mostly of an animistic type. The majority are either the malignant ghosts of deceased ancestors or the spirits inhabitating natural objects — for the Lepcha views every animal, plant, river and stone as having a spiritual personality like his own.

The benevolent class of spirits are called *Rûm* in contradistinction to the malicious *Mung* who are supposed to cause disease, death and other disasters. The chief of the good spirits is *Ta-shi Tak-bo Rûm* [2]) or "The Sky-existing Head-Father-Spirit", who also is called *Tashi-ting* [3]) or "The Sky-existing Lord". This ancient name for the chief Lepcha divinity was transferred to a Lamaist Saint by the Lama who composed the afore mentioned *Tashe-sung* in order to secure for his Lamaist hero the homage and worship of the Lepchas [4]). Many of the minor good spirits are of the nature of good fairies. One of these is a water nymph called 'The Rainbow Fairy' (*Tung-kung-mit*) who haunts the rainbow spray of rivers and cascades; and those who would fish at such places usually worship her [5]). Those spirits are sometimes entitled 'The Unseen' (*Mū*) and the prayer to them is called *Mū-e*.

The malignant devils or *Mung* [6]) are of many kinds. Those who infest the depths of the forest are called "Angry fire" (*Mi-gdut*) and in appearance like flames of fire as tall as the highest trees. Those inhabiting swampy muddy springs are *Lang-nong* [7]) and those [153] haunting rocks and caves are *Lang-z'i*. These latter cause fatal dropsy in those persons who desecrate their haunts by lighting fires or soiling the stones in the vicinity. The especial abode of the chief Mung, who is called 'The father Devil', is at a rock amidst ruinous landslips on the gorge of Sivok [8]) where the great affluent river of the Sikhimese mountains, the Tista, rushes into the plains. Another celebrated Mung is "The goge" (*A-kyong*) who inhabits a cliff in the forest of Gel below Darjiling.

Amongst deified ancestors the chief are Fodung Ting and Tek-kong Tek and their wives Ne-zong Ñyo and Ne-Kong Nal. These are the first traditional chiefs of the tribe, and the name Tek-kong, meaning 'to preserve independence', is suggestive of some struggle in which this legendary chief was successful [9]), though the Lepchas never seem to have [622] developed any organized coherence or polity. Their so-called 'Kings' were only headmen, and lived in huts little better than the poorest members of the tribe.

Worship is rendered almost exclusively to the bad spirits and not to the good. For,

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[1]) loc. cit. 9.

192 [2]) *Ta-shi* is from *Ta* sky and *shi* to be. *Tak*, a contraction for *Tŭk* head, and *bo* father — literally 'the giver'.

[3]) *Ting* (*A-Ting*) = lord or supreme, probably from *Ting*, to soar aloft (? hence *Ting-kyi*, the Kestrel or Sparrow-hawk). Compare with Burmese '*A-teng*', honorific exclamation to superiors.

[4]) The name in this book is altered to *Ta-she*, the Tibetan *She* a judge being substituted for the Lepcha affix *Shi*.

[5]) Two classes of spirits incidentally mentioned by Mr. M. (p. 21) are 'personal demons' *Nang-lyen-no* and *Ka-t'ang-fi*, guardians of males and females respectively.

[6]) This word is perhaps related to the Chinese *Mo*, a devil.

[7]) This *Lang* is said to mean „fallen down" and not *Lang*, a stone, though this is doubtful.

[8]) *Sŭŭ-fok*, literally impenetrable jungle, debris or peelings. This wild ravine is lined by the debris of the inner mountains and overgrown with densest jungle.

[9]) Other 'Kings', who are mentioned in songs, are Turve and Sŭkong. This last was said by the Lamas to have visited Hades and returned to tell the tale — a *De-lok* — as noted by me in my Buddhism of Tibet p. 166.

776 say the Lepchas, the good spirits never do us any harm; it is only the malignant spirits
which we have to fear. To propitiate the most malitious of the evil spirits are priests and
[756] priestesses or rather wizards, all of whom are absolutely illiterate – unable to read or
write. And their ritual is of the most elementary and loosest kind. They live like the
[178] ordinary members of the tribe and have no temples, for the Lepchas have no images nor
any visible objects of devotion, though lately some of them occasionally worship in Lama-
[177] temples.

The priest is called *Bong-ting* or 'Lord-Oracle' literally 'Mouth-Lord' [1]); the mouth-
756 piece of communication between the poor Lepcha and the Great Spirit. But more in
demand than the priest is the priestess, the *Măăn* or *Măăn-mak*, who may be the wife
of the Bong-ting, though not necessarily so; and both of these offices are usually hereditary.
This priestess or priest is resorted to in every case of serious disease, for the Lepcha
[753] believes that disease is always one to the machinations of an evil spirit and he has no
faith at all in medicines. In the priestly rites there is no dancing as in the Shamanistic
Bon of Central Asia. In their worship, which is of fear and not love, they invoke the
Mung or other evil spirit by cutting a bamboo into pieces and sticking the pieces into the
ground with bits of stone Then they propitiate the spirit with sacrifice of a fowl or a
pig, and implore it to release its victim. Occasionally they perform sympathetic magic in
cases of severe pain by drawing blood with a dry knife or spike of bamboo, without
wounding the skin, like the Pawang wizards of the Malay Archipelago [2]). And so highly
are these poor aboriginal priests esteemed, even by the immigrant Tibetans in Sikhim, that
these latter, although professing the superior Lamaism, frequently condescend to employ
these Lepcha priests and priestesses, in the belief that the latter hold especially close
relations with the indigenous spirits of the country. It is a question how far this partiality
for female priests may be a survival of the matriarchy before referred to, or whether it
may be owing to most of the malignant divinities being female and so requiring a
female priest.

533 Coming now to the songs themselves, we see that they are idyllic in character. Their
words refer mostly to the inscrutable mystery of the origin and destiny of man and the
primitive passion of love. It is curious to notice how they gratefully associate themselves
[824] with the Bamboo, whose stout stem supplies them with the sheltering frame-work, walls
and thatch of their huts, with fuel, bows and arrows; its larger joints afford water-jugs,
cooking pots and pans; its smaller joints supply bottles, smoking pipes and flutes; its
branches make a springy couch; its bark supplies baskets, umbrellas and ropes, and its
tender shoots are eaten as food. The songs are sung usually to the accompaniment of a
[534] flute or a sort of Jew's harp. This small harp is also used by the Nāgas and other
Malayan races. It is made of bamboo and decorated by curving or burned in 'poker'-work
with a plaited or basket-pattern. It is called *Tang-dyu* – the name *Tang* being apparently
onomatopoetic for the twanging sound it produces. The flute called *Po-lit* is also of bamboo
as its name denotes and it is decorated like the harp.

The melody of two of the chief of these songs I am able to give here through the

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[1]) This title is practically identical with the 'Gods' mouth (*Hla-k'a*) of the Bon religion. Cf. my Buddhism of Tibet p. 482. The term *Yok* or *Yok-mun* is usually applied to the Lamas and Nepalese priests, and may be a corruption of the Indian *Yogi*. An assistant-priest is called *Tiyol-bo*.

[2]) Malay Sketches by F. A. Swettenham, London 1895.

CHAPTER III

THE MOUNTAIN TRIBES OF SIKKIM

A. THE LEPCHAS

The Lapches or Lepchas are supposed to be the original 161
inhabitants of Sikkim. They call themselves Rong; the Tibetans call them Mon, and the Bhutanese, Meri. The Mongoloid problem can best be studied through the Lepchas of the Southern Himalayas and hence they are dealt with more thoroughly.

According to one opinion the Lepchas are supposed 173
to have come not from Tibet, but from the east of the mountains from Assam and Upper Burma.[22] Their own tradition, how- [illegible]
ever, states that their original home was in the neighbourhood [103]
of the great mountain, Kang-chen-mdzod-lnga[23] the second highest mountain in the world. That is the Tibetan name and means the "Great Glacier of the Five Store-rooms." The Lepcha name for the mountain is, "King-tzum-song-bu." King-tzum means "Highest part of the forehead," song-bu means "the highest." Literally it means, "the highest over our head." This Lepcha name is reproduced phonetically by the Tibetans as "Kang-chen-mdzod-lnga," which has
quite a different meaning. This snow-covered mountain has [776]
an important part to play as the habitat of the spirits. King-tzum-rum is the god of happiness; Rum-king-tzum is the god of fate.[24] From it the Lepchas derive the name Rong, by which they are known. Rong means "peak" or "mountain peak" and has the same significance as the word Arong.

Another tradition has it that the place of their origin is on the holy mountain Kailasa (Ti se) way up in Tibet. On
the mountain is the stone Ne-long which bears the footprints [778
of Buddha and of animals. The god, Pum-rum, protector of 776]
the hunters, lives there. Pum-rum is also another name for the Supreme God of the Lepchas as we shall soon see. The

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[22] J. C. White, Sikkim and Bhutan, London, 1909, p. 7.

[23] Kangchenjunga, Fig. 17 & 18.

[24] G. B. Mainwaring and A. Grünwedel, Dictionary of the Lepcha Language, Berlin 1898, 17a, 356 b.

173 oldest homeland bears the name Damsang. We have here an inkling of the Tibetan Lama influence, which, as in Hindu tradition, links the original homeland with the holy district. Since the King-tzum-song-bu is very closely linked with the myths of the Lepchas we shall go more deeply into a study of it.

(a) MYTHS OF THE CREATION OF THE WORLD

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776 The myths of the creation are of special importance. "Create" in the Lepcha language is called "ayit" or "it" in its abbreviated form. Another word for create is "de-bo." "It-rum" or "de-rum" means "god of creation"; "Rum" by itself means "god." "Pum-thing-rum" signifies the same. "Pum bo" means "Principal," "Chief," "God." The name "It-bo" or "It-bo-mu" is again taken from the creative action of god. Other names are, "Ta-she-thing," "Sa-dzug-rum." The latter are connected with the sun god and are used by some as the emblem of the Supreme God.

The following is the myth about creation: In ancient times Rum created a great expanse of water. Nothing else existed at the time. Then he created on the bed of the water the fish "ngo." Next he formed three pairs of deities who lay down crosswise on the fish. The first of the pairs were Rug-lu and Rug-lom, and after them were Mon-li and Rōng-gul, Pō-ril and Pō-dong. These are three pairs of male and female deities. Over these were fashioned Sōm-li and Sōm-nag-mōn-mu, a couple who as man and wife are supposed to belong to the human race. They all carried the earth which rested on them in the form of a dish. The slightest movement of the fish resulted in earthquakes. Rum then created the great mountains of the earth, the chief of which is King-tzum-song-bu; then four more peaks, Pōn-dām, Pōn-tzum-dju, Pōn-tzum-tang-rem-dju, Don-dong-tang-nyik-dju. Another story records that two chief mountains were created, *viz.*, the Kang-chen and the Kang-lo. Another Mun makes a contrary statement, "The snow-capped mountain Kang-chen-rum was created first and as a companion to it, Nyo-ling-rum, the goddess of the great ocean was created." In some versions of this story the goddess is named Lyang-serdong-bong, who is a mountain goddess in the plain. There exist many other variations about the sequence of creation. 773 776

Then Rum made the two rivers, Rong-nyo and Rong-nyit, to flow down from the mountains. They are male and female. In the middle of the female Rong-nyo, he created the rock, Lyang-nyit-long-bong, similar to the navel in the human body. A high mountain, regarded as the navel of the world is a well-known conception in Asia. The goddess, Lyang-nyit-long-bong, is supposed to live on this rock and childless parents pray to her to be blessed with children. The idea of male gods having their abode on the snow-capped mountains and the goddesses in the lakes, is fairly common among the Lepcha. These gods and goddesses are often linked with the first parents in Lepcha mythology.[25]

The sacrificial prayers of the Mun and the Bong thing are often preceded by a legend of creation. The text which we shall later render in detail begins thus :

"Fa dong dju fa dong dö gom shi gom yu rum ! 773
Fa dong dju and Fa dong dö (personal male and female deities) and Gom shi, Gom yu rum (hunting gods). 776 539
Lyang it ung it lyang sog döm it
The earth was created, the water was created and the whole world was created.
Chi log so log it
Millet beer and husked rice were created
Lyang tög bu ta she it ga.
Lyang wife, and Tög bu ta she's son (man) were created"[26]

Another part reads as follows :

"Ayan na ba lyang ung ma it ma den na ba.
In very ancient times when land and water were not yet created."

An old report has the words :

"Ta she nun rum ayit ……	Ta she created the good spirits
Num shim nyo ayit	He created man.
Lyang ayit	He created the earth.
Ung ayit	He created water
Gun pang ayit	He created all things."[27]

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[25] Report of Gu-gu Bong thing at Git biyong.
[26] Text of Gu-gu Bong thing.
[27] Dictionary of the Lepcha language, op. cit., p. 121 b.

773 Another myth of creation reads as follows: "In the beginning, the world was all water, and there were no living [776] creatures. Then the Creator made an earthenware pot that floated on the water, and this was land that floated on the sea. Like a human body that is made of flesh and bones the earth is made of rock and soil.

In the lowlands the Creator planted the bamboo, the sisin-nambong. After that, he made the Lang-chuk Lang-dal, that are now known as the Himalaya mountains, and he created the pa-song pumun bamboo which grows at the foot of these hills. And then he created Pudung-thing and Nazong-gnyu who were the first male and female, and it is from these two that human beings were spread over the entire world. Then there was neither birth nor death; but this was created later to suit the world.

The seeds of all the crops were given by Pudung-thing and Nazong-gnyu to all their children who cultivated the [173] land and lived on the produce."[28] If the elements are connected with creation it is surely due to Tibetan and Hindu influence. [772] In the lowest region is the wind, and above it are fire, water and earth.[29] However, only two elements are mentioned: Ti-gung-thik, the first man who is supposed to be identical with fire, and Ni-gung-ngal, the first woman, who is identical with water.[30]

Apart from the earth the heavens were also decked out with the sun, moon, stars and clouds created by Rum.[31] It is also narrated that in the beginning there were two suns in the sky. One of these shone by day and the other by night. As it never grew dark, the earth suffered from incessant heat, and so one of the suns was shot down. Seven or more moons were supposed to have existed.[32] These, too, are mythological [177] themes which the Lepchas have in common with the Indo-Chinese peoples. Myths about creation are very numerous among these tribes.[33]

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[28] C. B. Stocks, Folklore and Customs of the Lepchas of Sikkim, Journal and Proceedings, Asiatic Society of Bengal, N. S. Vol. XXI, 125/127. N. 4. p. 350.

[29] C. B. Stocks, op. cit., p. 345.

[30] Story as told by a Bong thing from Git biyong.

[31] cfr. op. cit. p. 439.

[32] op. cit. p. 336, Note 1, p. 363 sq.

[33] cfr. G. Gorer, Himalayan Village, An account of the Lepchas of Sikkim, London 1938, p. 223 sq.; cfr. The Song of Creation in Waddell, Among the Himalayas, London, 1900, p. 294 sq.

775 and each patron of some sort of grain. These seven brothers are progenitors and ancestors and guardians of the Lepchas. They were created by Itpomu who placed rice and millet and maize in their charge when she made these crops. The people of Mayal live in seven huts; they are immortal; each morning they are infants,—at midday they are grown men, and in the evening they are old. They all have huge
[164- goitres and it is from them that people know that big goitres
787] are a sign of prosperity and a large harvest. They wear the traditional Lepcha costume of clothes made of nettle cloth and small basket-work hats. They are between gods and ordinary human beings; they are not gods because they live on earth; but they are not human because they do not die. The land of Mayal is far up the Tulung valley somewhere behind the Kinchenjunga; at some time in the past the road thither was open, but now it has been closed and is as unpassable as the cutting edge of a knife.

[776] On the road to Mayal are three guardian spirits called Sog-po, who are brothers; the eldest is called Mayel-Yook-Rum, he is also called Pong-rum when the hunters offer sacrifice to him; his younger brothers, Mi-tik and Tom-tik, are cruel deities who kill and eat men and animals. Tom-tik is like a bear. They are the special guardians of the ibex
[825] and the musk deer which come from Mayal, which is the reason why these animals are so difficult to kill. In the country of Mayal crops grow a hundred times as big as here, and it is from this country that the seeds of our present crops originate. These crops are always ripe for harvesting. The migratory birds are called 'Mayel fo', birds of Mayal, and
[825] they are sent out by the people of Mayal to the Lepchas to indicate the seasons and the times when various agricultural acts should be performed. When the time comes for the
[825] migrating birds to return to Mayal, the parent birds die on the way and only the newly hatched ones survive the arduous journey to Mayal from whence they are sent the next year to act as indicators for the Lepchas. The people of Mayal have no wives living with them but the two oldest of the people 'Adoo-Yook and Alau-Yook, have in a way, as wives the two
[776 sisters Talyeu-Nimu and Sanguo-Nimu, who are the spirits
772] of the earth : these two women lie on their backs on the earth

and on their bellies are the cultivable lands. Into this Adoo- 775
Yook and Alau-Yook send rice and millet and maize, just as [776
if it were human seed from a husband and the women are 777]
fertilised and fruitful.

In the old days the path to Mayal was opened and sometimes the people of Mayal came to other parts of the world ; and occasionally adventurous hunters found their way into the Mayal country."[36] According to other stories not only the seven brothers but all the ancestors of the Lepchas live in Mayal.

Another Lepcha named Ti-gung-a-thik and Ni-gung-a- 773
ngal as the original ancestor. They lived a happy life and could hunt and roam wherever they liked. Food was available everywhere. Suffering and death were unknown to them. Their land was called Nemayal. Two Lepcha hunters once came to the land. The inhabitants gave them the seeds of gherkins, millets, rice and maize. The hunters however, forgot to ask them when the seeds were to be sown. So they went back again and asked them for the necessary instructions. The people of Mayal said, "When the ducks come back from Tibet, then you must sow the seed." That is February or March. Still they did not know a suitable season for planting the other seeds. They had, therefore, to spend a great deal of time making experiments until they found the most suitable times for sowing the seeds. Among these seeds was rice, which was supposed to be used only for sacrificial purposes. They chewed the husks of rice to see if the seed was ripe, and, finding it sweet, they began to consume it as food for themselves.[37]

The Dān-si Bong-thing from the Song-bur-mu tribe, who lives in Kafār-Basti, gave us the following information : The Lepchas come from Song-bur-tchu on the left of the Kangchen-mdzod-lnga. In the beginning there existed only the 773
god Rum. No demons existed at the time. The god had 776
no special name. He then created a pair of deities, Agek-rum and Alat-rum, who are the protecting spirits of procreation. Ta-she-thing and Tōg-bu-thing then came into being. But

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[36] op. cit. p. 225 sq.

[37] Report from Sam-sing near Maria-Basti.

773 the real god of creation is It-ho. He has a wife by name of [776] De-bo. (It-bo and De-bo mean "to produce" and "to create.") It-bo first created a man Ti-gung-thik. He then took a bone from the body of this man and out of it he created a wife for him. The place where the first human beings lived was called Da-lon-par-tan. (This is also the plain in which the tower intended to reach heaven was constructed.) The first couple lived there in perfect happiness and contentment until they became sinful. When they fell into sin the god Rum punished them by sending great floods which continued unabated for fifteen days so that all the people were drowned. Only one Lepcha couple were able to save themselves in a wooden ship.

Stocks narrates the following myth of creation : "In the beginning there was only sea, and the creator Tashey-takbo- [772] thing made two kinds of fish,—ngo, was the common kind, while the ngo-yang had a serpent form. From the sea we believe that a tortoise supports the world, and on it Tashey-takbo-thing created birds and animals.

Then he tried to make a form of man from butter, but it would not stand up, as whenever he made it, it melted. (Had the butter only remained firm, we should all have been very beautiful). Then he made a human form of earth and mud, and wind came into this resemblance of man and life was created. Then Tashey-takbo-thing made blood out of the water which he put in it and the bones he created from stone. Then he moved away to see whether the creature he had made could answer him and speak, but as he had no nerves or veins he was unable to do so. So Tashey-takbo-thing picked a great many creepers from the jungle and from those which he spread all over the form, it spoke.

Thus was the first male created, but as there was no female he was lonely, and could not reproduce himself. One day as he was catching birds with his snare in the jungle, Tashey-takbo-thing entangled a woman in one for him to catch. So the man caught her and brought her to his home ; but at first they could not marry as there was no go between to help them to talk over the matter. But at last the Rum decided to send the owl (tam-bum) down the country of creation,

It-lyang."[38] This myth is interesting because it relates, in the 773
first place, the two efforts made by God to create man, and secondly because it relates how God brought the woman into the life of the man, by placing her in some mysterious way in the snare set by man to catch birds.

According to another myth the genealogy of mankind is 773
even more complicated. Among the various creatures that 776
were created as It-mo's children, there is also Takbo-thing, who hitherto had been designated as the god of creation. Ta-she is added to the name with whom we shall become more closely acquainted later on. "The last two to be born were Takbo-thing and Nazong-ngyu, and although these were brother and sister, they became husband and wife and had many children."[39] These children however were evil spirits and demons. They were not nourished by their mother, but were disowned and driven away. They live not on the earth but outside the earth. The reason why monsters were born out of this wedlock was surely due to the forbidden and irregular marriage between brother and sister. Rum then separated them. After the separation a human being was born. The mother loved this child deeply and fed it at her breast. When the other children perceived this they grew very jealous, hated the child intensely and so it died. The grief-stricken mother sent two birds up to Takbo-thing in order to fetch from him the Water of Life and the Water of Death. Tak-bo-thing gave them both the waters and instructed them about the use of the waters. On their return flight the birds decided not to use the directions as they had been given to them but to reverse them. And so it happens that men die and are always born again. Rum stands as a symbol to man. The Mung demons, on the contrary, do not die, and a priest-magician, Bong-thing, was sent to keep them under control. Only then was it possible for man to live on the earth. He is called Tar-bong-mu. As he was catching birds one day he found a fairy, the daughter
of the Lha-ma-yin.[40] He forcibly took this beautiful Na- [585]
rib-nom as his wife. To avoid the misfortune consequent

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[38] op. cit. p. 255 sq.
[39] op. cit. p. 346.
[40] Tibetan name for Titans.

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776 [585] [373] to an irregular marriage, Rum decided that the marriage ceremonies should be observed. Milletbeer and ferment play an important part in these ceremonies. After the institution of the marriage ceremonies in this manner, the first men could contract a permitted marriage between brother and sister and their children are human beings.

The same story of procuring a ferment for Chi is told by Bong-thing Gu-gu in Git-biyong. Also another myth which we have discovered throws light on the relationship between men and demons: Ti-gung-thik and Ni-gung-ngal had a son. The demon, Susu-mung, also had a son. Both of these children were on the point of dying; and while they were breathing their last, two birds were sent to fetch the Water of Life and the Water of Death as medicine. The birds obtained both, but exchanged the medicines on their return flight. They gave the human child the Water of Death and it died. The child of the demon received the Water of Life and escaped death. Thus it is that demons still continued to plague men. Men made an effort to annihilate the demon, and when it had climbed a high tree one day they pulled the tree down and knocked the demon to pieces. Nevertheless, as the demon had tasted the Water of Immortality, the fragments of his body were transformed into flies, mosquitoes and other dangerous insects which continue to plague mankind.[41]

An old Lepcha, Sam-sing, from Maria-Basti told me this story: All men have descended from common parents. The first parents had three sons. The first was called Lapche and was the father of the Lepcha tribe. The second is the father of the Rai, and the third the father of the Meche. In the course of their wanderings the brothers came across a banana palm. The eldest brother stuck his knife into it with the intention of cutting it down. White water flowed out of the wound. "If that is the case, we shall not stay any longer with you," said the two brothers and they left him and went their way. The two then came across a Gommim leaf. The second brother cut the leaf and the cut turned black. Thereupon the youngest brother said to him, "If

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[41] cfr. a similar myth of Stocks, op. cit., p. 384.

that is the case I will no longer stay with you." Henceforth 773
he wandered alone until he came to a plain where he made 776
his abode.[42]

According to another legend, man springs from a pair of deities or from deified ancestors. The above-mentioned Tak-bo-thing and Nazong-ngyu belong to the category of these deified ancestors. The old woman, Han-bu-ni, who is Mun and Andshemu told me this, "Sa-dzug-rum is the god of heaven and the sun. His wife is Gor-song-mu, that is the mother of Gor-song, because she has a son by that name. She also has a daughter. Sa-dzug-rum is like a father and mother of mankind. I offer sacrifices to him three times each [782
year after the rice, corn and millet harvests. The animal 241]
most suitable for the sacrifice is the pig. The next best is the bullock or cow, and the goat ranks last. The pig is killed by piercing its heart from under the shoulder-blade. The cattle are killed by a blow with an axe on the back of the neck. The goats have their throats cut.

Another pair of deities are Kang-chen-rum, who lives in 776
Himal, and his wife, Nyo-lig-rum, who lives in the sea. They have two children; the son, Dju-kōb, and the daughter, Bi-kōb. But the highest of all these gods is Sa-dzug-rum."

Thus this old Mun and Andshemu regards Sa-dzug-rum as their Supreme God, and believes that he has a wife. She however disagrees about calling Gor-song the first man. She also denies that Dju-kōb and Bi-kōb were the ancestral parents of the tribe. However she was unable to give us the names of the first men.

Sa-liang, the son and pupil of the famous Bong-thing Ongdi, contradicted her and related the following, "The Supreme God is Sa-dzug-rum. He has no wife, but four assistants. These are the four spirits who bring discord and pain into the world. They have therefore to be appeased by sacrifices [782]
performed twice a year. Sa-dzug-rum is not the god of creation. Rather, it is Rum who is the god of creation. He
it was who created the first human beings, Ti-gung and Ni- [773]
gung. For a while they were serenely happy and were free from anxiety and suffering. Later they sinned, and as a

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[42] cfr. a similar myth quoted above p. 7.

776 consequence they had to labour in order to procure their
[773] livelihood. These first human beings are the parents of the Rong (Lepcha), the Brug-pa (Bhutanese) and the Jimdar (Nepalese). The very first man, the progenitor of the race, is Ti-gung-pum." So far the statement of Sa-liang. And so we have different traditions that tell the story of the first human beings. Often entire genealogies of gods and spirits are quoted.[43] Finally, the immediate ancestors of mankind make their appearance. The presence of evil in the world is sometimes attributed to them, for, being brother and sister, they live as man and wife, without the proper performance of the marriage ceremonies. Other myths offer other solutions for the problem of evil in the world.

(*c*) MYTHS OF THE DELUGE

773 "In the beginning all men were good. Gradually they grew perverse. This annoyed Rum to such an extent that he sent a great deluge to destroy them all. Only one high mountain peak remained above the water. This was originally called Dōng-grung, a ladder which links earth with heaven. The mountain is now called Dān-dong. In order to appease god and make the flood abate, the people sacrificed chi, millet beer, through the bird 'ko-hon,' (partridge). As the bird sprayed the chi in sacrifice to heaven some of it fell on its breast. This fact is supposed to explain why even today, the bird's breast is bitter to the taste. The sacrifice was pleasing to god and the flood abated."

We have still another version of this tradition, "Rong-nyo, the female river, and Rong-nyit, the male, were deliberating with each other as to how they could meet and unite on the plain at the outskirts of the jungle. In the Lepcha language this place is called Pa-sog. Rong-nyo chose as her guide through the mountains a snake which glided straight to their destination. Rong-nyit chose the partridge as his guide. The bird flew hither and thither and took a confusing route across the mountain, thus causing Rong-nyit to arrive late at the rendezvous. He was very angry when he discovered that Rong-nyo had already arrived. Furiously he shouted, 'I

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[43] cfr. Stocks, op. cit. 345 sq.

773 [776] In another legend the serpent king is connected with the flood : "....And then he created Pudung-thing and Nazong-gnyu who were the first male and female and it is from these two that the human beings have spread over the entire world..... When these two were made, birth so multiplied that there was not enough room in the world. Then Parli-bu, who was the serpent-king, dammed the rivers by lying in them, and they overflowed and rose to a great height and reached the sky. Everyone fled to the top of Kong-chen-chu, the highest peak in the Himalayas, but only two people were saved. The place where they stood is called Mayak-kyong to this day. While the flood was raging, Tashey-thing sent a hero down into the world named Yongli-pono, to kill the serpent who was blocking the rivers. The hero cut the serpent to pieces thus making the waters run down into the plains and we, the Rong folk, still believe that the Blue Mountains (that can be seen from the valley of Rangpo-chu) are the remains of the cut body of the serpent. When the world was dry once again, Tashey-thing sent down two rivers from the Himalaya mountains guided by another serpent called king Paril-patong and a quail, the Ko-hun-fo, and these were Rung-nyo (Tista) and Rung-nyit.

He also sent Pudung-thing and Nazong-gnyu down into the world from the height of Mayal-kyong, giving them the name Tikung-tek and Nikong-gnal. These are the first 'grandfather' and 'grandmother' of the Rong folk. As they had no king, Tashey-thing sent down Gyabo-chaya-dor-tulku from Mayal-kyong and he is the 'grandfather' (ancestor) of the present Maharaja."[46] This legend links the first parents with the flood and the re-peopling of the earth. The name of the first king who is sent by the High God is quite Tibetan and points to Tibetan motifs, according to which, the first king came from heaven.

Mainwaring, the great collector of cultural treasures of the Lepchas, cites the following myth, "It may be noted that the Lepchas have legends in common with divers other primitive races,....regarding the flood and the tower of Babel. The legends were without doubt, brought with them

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[46] op. cit. 386 sq.

773 173 down). They wondering greatly shouted up to ask the man at the top whether he really meant it. This time they heard the words 'ak, ak' (yes, yes). And they at once cut the tower down, which falling, killed many of the Na-ong, and those that remained had to separate on account of their not being able to understand one another. And even today broken earthern pots are to be found on that plain which is called Dalon-partan."[48] And so we see that the Lepchas also possess myths pertaining to the flood, to the building of the tower and the babel of tongues in common with so many other South Asian peoples, *e.g.* the Miau, the Lolo, the Thai, the Mikmir and many others.

(*d*) THE LAND OF THE GODS AND SPIRITS

772 776 The myth describing the building of the tower demonstrates the effort made by the Lepchas to reach Rum-lyang, the land of the gods. The Lepchas are of the opinion that this land lies in the region of the heavens. From this land Rum is supposed to look down to earth. From there too, gods and spirits come down to the land of men, or they send messengers and strange powers in the form of thunderbolts to bring about strange births on earth.[49] On the other hand heroes, and the steeds on which they ride may occasionally fly up to heaven before actual dying. These are the same mythical motifs that are common among the Tibetans.[50]

The ancestral spirits, who, as we saw above, are in Mayal, are sometimes said to be in Rum-lyang. We shall probe into this question more deeply, when we treat about the cult of death.

According to other Lepchas, the land of the gods does not lie above, in the region of the heavens but below. Consequently they call this region "Dhing-song-rum." "Dhing-song" means below. The Kalimpong native on whose authority we have sometimes relied, indulges in the following line of reasoning, "The seed must fall down into the earth before it can spring forth and bear fruit. When it has ripened

[48] Stocks, op. cit. p. 359 sq.
[49] Stocks, op. cit. p. 336 sq.
[50] op. cit. p. 337.

it falls down to the earth once again. This is the line of 772
action from lower to the higher. And so it must be that the 776
land of the gods must be below." In this as in other matters we find that there is a varied line of reasoning among the Lepchas.

(e) THE LAND OF SOULS

Some Lepchas believe that the souls of the departed 775
go to the country of the ancestors, Ren djong or Mayal. [774]
Others say on the contrary that the soul goes to Rum-lyang. It was there before birth ; thither it returns again after death to be born again as a little child in the land of souls. Immediately after death, the soul goes to an intermediate place Sön-lyang, originally called Söm-lon, the leader of souls. The Bong-thing summons it back thence and asks it, at the death ceremony how it died, whether it was through illness or through the magic of wicked men. The soul then comes to the ear of the Bong-thing and gives him this important information. He makes the necessary provisions for the individual soul on the basis of this information. The Mun or Bong-thing then leads the soul to the Rum-lyang and locks it up securely so that it cannot return to its pristine home or relations
or cause them any manner of harm. The entire ceremony [764]
is performed in the Sang-lion rite. A year after death the Bong-thing goes in a trance to Rum-lyang, opens up the place where the soul had been locked. There he finds a little child. He dresses it up in a child's clothes and releases it to live and grow up among the other ancestors.[51]

According to others there is an intermediate place called [772]
Tiamtan, or Sari-rung-dong-chen or Siri-nong-dong-chen.[52] Another place is called Nyo-lyang, the abode of the wicked.
There are divergent views about the land of souls, just as [184]
there are about the land of gods. An old Mun woman of Git-biyong gave us this pertinent item of information, "We bring the souls of the dead very high up in to the heavens and
very near the Supreme God, Ta-she-thing. He it is who has [776]
created us, the animals and everything else."

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[51] cfr. G. Gorer, Himalayan Village, London 1938, p. 353 sq.
[52] cfr. Stocks, op. cit. p. 337.

(f) THE CONCEPT OF GOD

776 The Lepchas express the idea of God by the word "Rum." By this term they understand gods and spirits which are favourable to men and who offer them protection. In contrast to the word Rum, they have the word "Mung" to indicate the goblins and the demons who are harmful to man. The Rong possess a few genealogies of gods with which we shall later become acquainted. The name "Rum" standing all by itself expresses the idea of the Supreme God ; but words expressing the special attributes of the Supreme God are often joined to the word "Rum." To cite a few instances : Pum means "first cause," "the essential," "the absolute," "the first beginning," and so we have the words : Pum-rum, Pum-thing or Pum-thing-rum, which are popular names for the Chief God. Then again "ayit (it)," "(ay)it-de," "de-bo," or "(ay) it-bo" mean "to create," "to produce," and we have the words It-rum, De-rum, It-bo and Pum-bo, all of which express the idea of God as the creator. Some of the Lepchas say that the Supreme God is not the creator, but that he delegated the function of creation to some other spirits. In the concept of God that is current among the Rong, we can observe that the original functions of the Supreme God have been attributed to spirits who are looked upon by them as the adjutants and the supporters of the Supreme God. This is how the divine genealogies originate and lead up to a kind of demiurge and other forms.

Some of the Mun and the Bong-thing call the Supreme God, Sa-dzug-rum. Sa-dzug is the sun. Sa-dzug-rum means "sun god" as well as "God of the heavens." "Ta-she-thing" is a very common name for the Supreme Being. Su-li-man, a Lepcha from the Bam-ling tribe, who lives in Se-ryo-cha, gave us this description of the Supreme God. "Ta-she-thing is the Supreme God. He is everywhere. Anyone who understands the rites may offer him a sacrifice." Ta-she-thing is the name given also to Padmasambhava who is the founder of Lamaism in Tibet. Occasionally one meets with the rather long drawn out name "Ta-she-tak-bo-thing." "Tak-bo-thing" or "Tok-bo-thing" is regarded by some as the son of Ta-she-thing. The majority of the Lepchas are of the opinion that Rum has no wife. But other names used for 776 the Supreme God are expressive of the belief that he had a wife. Han-bu-ni Mun said, "Sa-dzug-rum has a wife by the name of Gor-song-mu." Sa-liang, son of the Bong-thing Ong-di, contradicts this statement, "Sa-dzug-rum has no wife, but he has four help-mates. These are the four spirits who cause disquite and unrest in the world. They have [796 to be appeased by sacrifices which we perform twice a year. 782] Sa-dzug-rum is not the god of creation, which took place through another god."

Stocks writes, "It appears that there were five original deities: It-mo and her husband Pa-sandi, their children, Nazong-gnyu and Takbo-thing and Tashe-thing, the son of the former. In these creative power is attributed to the female deities, It-mo and Nazong-gnyu (note 1). The latter (Pasandi) is only mentioned once, and as apparently there is much confusion between the functions of him and of his son, Takbo-thing, it would be difficult to establish his real nature."[53] The same confusion exists between Ta-she-thing and Tak-bo-thing. We may note however that a female deity, contrary to the belief of Gorer, is never regarded as a Supreme Being. Gorer considers It-bo-mo to be female,[54] but we have seen that It-bo or Ayit-bo means the god of creation. The Dān-si Bong-thing from Ka-fāṛ says, "In the beginning there was only the God, RUM. He had no special name. The demons Mung were non-existent at the time. Then came the first pair of deities, Agek-rum and Alat-rum, the god and goddess of procreation. Then too, there existed Ta-she-thing and Tak-bo-thing. There was besides, It-bo and his wife De-bo. It-bo was the god of creation who created the first man, Ti-gung-tik." We did not come across the concept of a goddess as the Highest Being in all the Lepcha mythology, but we found certain very definite evidences of the belief that the Supreme God has a wife (cfr. genealogy of God p. 60).

Another important god is Pum-rum, the god of the hunters. 776 He is also called, among other names, Dju-thing or Pong-rum. 224 Dju-thing is honoured as a threefold being. In the highest

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[53] op. cit. p. 227.
[54] op. cit. p. 226.

776 mountain regions he is called Mo-nom-dju, for it is he who leads
224 the chamois and the wild sheep, Mo-nom, to the hunters.
In the lower hills he is called Se-go-bu-log-dju and delivers
up stag, bears and other game. In the lower plains he is
called Se-wing-dju, or the one who helps capture the game
of the plains. Gom-shi and Gom-yu-rum are hunting gods
and it is they who instil in the hunters the passion for hunting.
The god of the hunters is worshipped exclusively by the men
and the women do not in any way participate in the worship.
We shall consider the details of this sacrifice at a later stage.
[773 The Rong claim that "Rum-zong-pa-no gave them bows,
226] arrows and knives and taught them how to shoot fish."

The wife of Rum-zong-pa-no is Na-li-pun-di who ins-
776 tructed the women in the arts of farming, weaving and taught
[773] them housework and the use of the sickle. Sa-dju is another
god venerated as god of agriculture. If a housewife who
[781] is possessed by Sa-dju dies, the spirit continues to possess one
of her daughters even though the daughter may have in the
meanwhile left the family through marriage. This deity
appears to the women in dreams in the guise of an old man.
[787] If the apparition has a large goitre it augurs well for a rich
harvest. If on the other hand it has no goitre at all it omens
a bad harvest.

782 We already know from myths related earlier, that the
776 Lepchas were given the first seeds by higher beings. These
seeds were gaguni, which has the appearance of a millet-like
maize; sama, a kind of white millet; goya, dry rice, and
mokai, red maize. The dog plays an important role in the
obtaining of rice and hence the Rong give, each time, some
[231] portion of the rice they eat to the dog. We have noticed how,
after a meal of rice, the remnants are scattered on the floor,
and the dogs, which otherwise are not allowed inside the house,
came in and ate the rice. The sacrifice to the god of agriculture
is usually offered by the housewife. Nevertheless the man
can offer the sacrifice if for some grave reason the woman is
unable to do so. Man is not altogether excluded from the
performance of the sacrifice, as is the case with the women in
the sacrifice to the god of the hunters.

776 The family or household god is Rum-fat, who is the
protector of domestic animals. The two gods of procreation,

Ayek-rum and Alat-rum, have an important part in their 776
worship. The spirits that protect individual persons are also of importance. This is particularly true of Hit-rum who is the protecting spirit of the Bong-thing. When a Bong-thing dies his soul, like a shadow, goes to Hit-rum. The Dān-si Bong-thing from Ka-fār has the following nine protecting spirits: Sur-mu-mu-rum, Bong-thing-rum, Dang-mu-rum, Niu-leg-rum, Mōn-lam-rum, Tok-tzōm-rum, Darmit-rum, Nam-jin-rum. These he must honour in a very special manner. Thus we see that the Rong believe in the existence of many gods and spirits and take pains in arranging them in the order of male and female couples.

In contrast with these benign gods are the innumerable hordes of demons and goblins who cause harm to men and animals, fields and forests. There are tracks in the mountains which are considered to be the footsteps of the gigantic monster, Mi-gat-mung. Ma-ra-mung is a very evil demon, who flies up into the sky and reveals himself there in the form [821]
of comets, northern lights and other astral phenomena. Each one of the human illnesses is caused by a demon: Ru-mung, consumption; Dom-mung, leprosy; etc., and these [753]
constitute the great flock of disease-demons. Goblins and witches lurk in the mountains, woods, gorges and deserts. It is necessary to obtain safeguards and measures of protection against all demons and evil spirits, and these are vouchsafed by the Supreme Being through his priests, the Mun and the Bong-thing.

(g) THE MUN AND THE BONG-THING

Stocks quotes an illuminating legend concerning the 773
origin of the Bong-thing. Through the interchanging of the 776
Waters of Life and Death the Mung demons had acquired 793
immortality. It became incumbent on God to set right the order of things. "Everything was nearly completed, but a Bong-thing was required as a mediator to speak between the Rum and the Humans" (Rum made many efforts that failed). "...Then there was only one child of the Creator left, and he didn't wish to leave home, but the Creator who loved him like a mother, told him he ought to go and see his brothers

775 and sisters, the Himalaya Mountains, and the lakes and all
776 the rivers, in order that he might become a Bong-thing to
793 help the humans against the evil spirits.

And the child asked It-mo what would be the best things to carry with him on the journey, and the Creator gave him some ginger (salep), some garlic (paki-mun-gu) and a tree, the fruit of which he could place on a stick and burn slowly
[278] like a lamp (the safi-kun). And all these things are used externally and internally by the Bong-thing today, and from all these plants and bulbs medicine is made.

Taking all these bulbs the son came to the Lung-tun-parten tableland in the Himalayas but he found that the Mung had already come to that place; they had, indeed, spread over the whole country; they were in all the mountains and in all the trees and in all the caves. So he said to them, 'I was sent to go round the world, but you seem to be everywhere before me, so I will return to the Creator.'

[753
782] But when he turned and was leaving the Mung caught hold of him saying, 'On one condition we will do everything you command;—when we worry the human beings with disease and illness we will go away and leave them in peace if, in return, you will give us some fowls, eggs, pigs or any other animals.' The Bong-thing said, 'You force me to do this. Only swear you will leave all human beings in peace. I will call my brothers Sakbri-bu and Sahnang-bu to act as witnesses.' To this they all agreed and at the Partam-Sakber, the Mung swore that when they worried human persons with illness they would leave the sick person in peace were the Bong-thing do attend to the patient, and propitiate them, the Mung, by giving them offerings of a cow, a pig or of several goats. To make doubly sure, the Bong-thing asked the Mung to swear by spitting on a rock there, which they did, and so great was the oath that it shattered the rock to pieces. And again he asked them to swear and spit in the lake which they did; but the oath was so great that it caused the lake to dry up. Yet once more he asked them to swear by spitting on a tree which they did; but the tree could not bear the weight of the oath and it fell. This was the covenant between the Bong-thing and the Mung and we, the Rong folk, believe this is the origin of the Bong-thing.....And when

he had done this, he went up to Tiamtan where he built a 773 776
palace and we, the Rong folk, believe he still lives there. It 773
is a country that lies midway between heaven (Rum-lyang) [772]
and earth."[58]

The prime characteristic of the Mun or the Bong-thing 773
is the heavenly calling to officiate as intermediaries between
god and man. The Ling-gu Lepcha from Maria-Basti
relates an interesting fact: "If, in a dream, a man sees a [787]
thread descend on himself from heaven, he has to interpret
it as a summons from heaven to be a Bong-thing or a Mun.
Those pre-elected in this manner must necessarily obey the
summons and dedicate themselves to this office. It may
happen that a man sees the thread descend on someone else.
In this case he is not bound to reveal his dream to the person
concerned, who will in any case obey the summons. If
however anyone cuts the thread all of a sudden as the thread
is descending on the elected one, death will unexpectedly
overtake the one so elected."

The Dān-si Bong-thing from Ka-fār Basti gives us an 773
illuminating account of his experience in this regard. "Before 781
I became a Bong-thing," he narrates, "I became like one
possessed, and was driven into the heart of the forest. I was
utterly downcast and goaded on to a state of despair. As
time elapsed, I got accustomed to this state and began to
perceive the animals of the forest. The spirit then carried
me to a dizzy and precipitous rocky projection where I spent
the night. At midnight I was filled with superhuman strength,
so much so that I uprooted a gigantic tree. The following
morning the spirit brought me back. A man who had
noticed me uprooting the tree reported the incident to my
parents, who decided that I should become a Bong-thing."

At the age of about sixteen, the Gu-gu Bong-thing 773
suffered from a malingering illness which left him in a state
of perpetual exhaustion. As this state continued with an [787]
alarming uninterruptedness, his parents decided that he
should become a Bong-thing. He agreed to this and became
a disciple of the Bong-thing, A-thi.

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58. op. cit. p. 340 sq.

of rice and butter are in the first instance brought forward. 796
These are offered with little roasted birds, fish, incense and [778
chi, and in addition a rupee in money. Prior to the actual 782]
offering, garlands of flowers are prepared and hung up in
the house. The flowers are called "Sa-gi." "Amiāl" means
garlands, and it is from these that the festival derives its name
"Sa-gi-sa-amiāl." The god of power is also called "Sa-gi." [776]
"Sa-gi-fat" means sacrifice and annual festival. After the
performance of the sacrifice the men and women begin to [535]
dance, and during the dance they sometimes fall to the ground
and twitch and tremble. They are then lifted up and continue [781]
with the dance. The onlookers keep watch to ensure that
none of the dancers escapes from the room. The spirit of
my father who is now dead has passed over to my brother,
Sa-hō."

Next comes the actual vocation. This always takes 793
place during an illness when the physical powers of the patient 753
are at a low ebb. We had the opportunity of observing the 787
case of a girl who was, however, not a Lepcha but a Kami.
The sequence of events is nonetheless identical. The child is
said to be possessed by a Limbu spirit and at such times she
speaks the Limbu language. The people, therefore, insist
that she must become a soothsayer. The girl gets epileptic
fits and froths at the mouth. The nerves are upset and distraught
and the people see in all this a case of possession by
the spirit. The girl still is with her parents and prays each [782]
day at definite times to the spirit and renders it homage. At
a later stage the girl is brought to a teacher; not however to a [791]
Lepcha teacher, but to a Nepalese magician, since a Lepcha
will not teach a member of another tribe.

All those who receive this summons from the spirit must
necessarily answer the summons and go to a teacher who will
give them the required initiation, instruction, practices, and
teach them the prayers. A great sacrifice, mentioned by the 793
Han-bu-ni Mun above, has to be performed by way of initiation. 776
Gorer describes this ceremony as follows, "In the 782
house a little table is set up. On it to the right lies a scarf 778
of honour with a rupee. In the middle is a wooden vessel
which is filled with chi and garnished with butter round the
rim. On the right is a stone incense-burner filled with Tibetan

793 incense, and dry twigs from the cypress tree. In front of
796 the little table is a winnower on which parts of the animal
[782 sacrifices are arranged in the following manner: opposite
the vessel is the skull turned towards the table. Behind it
781] are the entrails. To the left of the skull is a hind leg, to the
front is a foreleg. Between the foreleg and the entrails is
a thigh with a little meat. When everything is arranged,
the teacher sits behind the table a little to the left, in front of
the scarf. His pupil sits on his right. Then he lays the scarf
on the pupil's hand and recites the prayers, which the apprentice repeats after him sentence by sentence. Then the master
makes a ceremonial speech to the initiated in which he
explains: 'Now the price for the freeing of your body is paid
to the demon, but under one condition, that you consecrate
your life to the Mun-god, and that you offer up your body
as his dwelling place.' After this speech he hands the vessel
filled with the chi to his pupil so that he can drink from it
three times from three different places. This drinking of the
chi from the vessel garnished with butter stands for the actual
ritual consecration. With this the pupil is bound for three
years to study with his master. At the end of the instruction,
a second sacrifice of a bullock is performed. With this the
pupil is given full powers and can function independently.

782 The most important sacrificial offering for all these
796 ceremonies is the bullock. An ox is desirable. If a pig
is given the neophite will be unable to expel Lom-doon-moong
[753 (the devil of Jaundice). If a goat, he will be unable to expel
776] Mat-moong, (the devil who produces various unpleasant
symptoms which are the results of ancestral quarrels)."[56]

793 According to our investigations, the Mun and the Bong-thing are both equally powerful magicians. They only,
can expel demons and appease the gods through sacrifice.
Both, men as well as women, can be Mun. The Mun spirit
is not a female spirit but can choose either men or women as
its servants. The Bong-thing can only be a man. The Mun
[778 and the Bong-thing whom we were able to observe, do not
293 wear any special ceremonial dress or ornaments during their
534] activities, neither do they use the double skull-drum (damaru)

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[56] op. cit. p. 479.

793 wrongly includes all similar phenomena. The Mun and the
789 Bong-thing bear the closest resemblance to the Barwas of the
171 Bhils, the Pariar or Parihar of the Korkus (Central India), the
Mantravadis of the Parayans and Pulayans (South India),
and the Mantravadis of many other primitive tribes of India.
We find here a very old class of magicians who have maintained
their primitive tradition, and have well established rites and
rules.

793 Next in importance to the Mun and the Bong-thing,
● [776] the male Pau and the female Andshemu or Nandshemu are
to be found among the Lepchas. Both these are said to be
Tibetan spirits and are not empowered to perform the great
sacrifices. They need the equipment of the Tibetan Shaman :
[778] —thunderbolts, skull-drums, etc. Tibetan influence is clearly
evinced in all details. It may be noted that a Mun can also
be an Andshemu, *e.g.* Han-bu-ni whom we have mentioned
on more than one occasion. When she came forth as an
[781] Andshemu she spoke Tibetan in the trance and employed
the Tibetan articles in the performance of the ceremonies.
A Bong-thing can at the same time be a Pau, and he uses the
Tibetan articles when he presents himself as a Pau. Some
investigators have failed to observe this difference, and have
in consequence erroneously declared the Mun and the Bong-thing
to be identical with the Tibetan Bon-po. Gorer failed
to perceive this important distinction, and hence there occur
in his work, statements which are contradictory to the observations
we have made. He states, for example, that the Mun
are only female. We have taken great pains to verify that there
are both male and female Mun. He calls the Bong-thing
"Padem," who was supposed to represent a Tibetan spirit.
[777] This, however, indicates the extent to which Tibetan influence
has extended in the area, particularly as the district in which
Gorer carried out his research lay further north, to the Tibetan
frontier. Gorer considers the Bong-thing to be weaker than
the Mun, which again is not true in the districts in which we
carried out our research. He draws a distinction between
two kinds of Mun ; the good Tang-li Mun, the white magician,
and the bad Mun-mook Mun, the black magician. Gorer
[754] however admits that whether one belongs to one type or to
the other, depends upon the teacher from whom the instruction

is received. If the teacher is a black magician, he teaches the 793 [754] black arts. It therefore has nothing to do with the Mun spirit who would be from the very beginning an evil being. This entirely contradicts the ancient tradition of the Mun and the Bong-thing who were established as mediators between God and men and as the protectors of men against the machinations of the demons. To this date the Mun and the Bong-thing have preserved these old traditions.[58]

The spirits of the Mun and the Bong-thing do not always [776] live in their mediums, but they stay in a place called Tiamtan, as we learned above. They come down from there only when they are summoned. They take complete possession of their mediums only two or three times each year, particu- [796 larly at the time of the festivals of the great sacrifices. At 784] other times the mediums do not fall into a total trance. As we did not have the opportunity of observing such a trance personally, we repeat the description as given by Gorer, "When they come down, the vessel which receives them feels as though bowed down by a heavy weight.

The Moon only takes possession of this vessel twice a 793 year, once in the hot season, and once in the wet season. 796 This is a big ceremony and elaborate sacrifices are made. The day before the sacrifices I start feeling ill ; I feel heavy [152] and pressed down and cannot bear any noise. I tremble constantly and I am covered with sweat. I pray to the gods [782] to let me off, and I offer the chi and incense in preparation for them to wait for the true sacrifices. The next day the ceremony is held inside a house and many people are present. I sit down cross-legged in front of the offerings. Besides the ordinary offerings there is a wreath of flowers and a flower bedecked stick. When I sit opposite these I feel a heavy [781] burden pressed over my shoulders and as if my flesh is being poked with sticks—zinga-zinga-zinga-zinga ; suddenly a sort of darkness comes over my eyes, it is as if I was in a sort of dream so that I know, see and remember nothing. But from what other people have told me and from what I have seen when other Mun have prophesied I know what takes place ; I put on the flower necklace and take up the stick and go and

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[58] Cfr. Gorer, op. cit. p. 220 sq.

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796 walk in the courtyard. (Were anybody else to put on the necklace on me the gods would be angry, and the rash man would receive the burden of the gods.) When I return everybody is hushed even the children. [789]

I blow into each person's face and on the offering; [787] then I scatter chi and prophesy in a loud and audible voice the things which are going to take place in the following half year. After the prophecy, I recover consciousness; but not till cock crow next day do I feel all right again.

755 When I am called in the case of an illness, the god does not fully enter me but I see the devil which is attacking the sick person either in the form of some animals or insect or person, depending on which devil it is. Thus Lum-dong-mong appears in a pig, Sor-moog as a dirty ragged old woman, [776 787] Arot-moong as a red butterfly. I see these visions out of the corner of my eye; if I look directly there is nothing there. But I watch these devils carefully out of the corner of my eye; if they go away without eating anything the patient will recover quickly; but if they take food the patient will probably die though I only tell him that the illness is very serious."[59] (fig. 19.)

(h) THE SACRIFICES OF THE MUN AND THE BONG-THING

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782 We had the opportunity of being present at and observing the sacrifice for a sick woman, by the Lha-ba Bong-thing (who is also a Pau). This sacrifice is called Mung-zug-fat. Mung-zug means "to cast out demons"; "fat" is sacrifice. To start with, all the things necessary for the sacrifice are kept in readiness. The Torma of rice and butter are arranged. The chi containers are filled, the butter-lamps are put up; incense and holy water are kept ready. A bullock is then brought near the front door of the house. A rope is tied to its right horn and the other end of the rope is taken into the house, and the sick woman is asked to hold it in her hand. The Bong-thing then comes near the ox and says, "Instead of the life of the woman, take the life of the ox. I am giving you the life of this ox in lieu of the life of this woman. His

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[59] op. cit. p. 220 sq.

life is of greater value than hers. Take it ! The body and 755
soul of the ox are greater than those of this person. Take 782
them! Leave the people in peace." As he says this he offers
chi, rice and butter, laying these three sacrificial gifts on the
forehead of the animal. Then, he says with greater emphasis,
"The body and the soul of this animal must be sacrificed." [774]
The ox is then killed by the blow of an axe on the nape of its
neck. Any one except a woman, can perform the actual
killing ; for if a woman were to kill the animal it would be [688]
a terrible misfortune and no one would be allowed to eat the [784]
meat. The head of the ox is then severed from the body
and the body is carved up. The legs are taken off, the
entrails and the internal organs are drawn out, the head
is taken off, the thorax is divided vertically into two, and the
loins with the tail are dissected.

The first part of the sacrifice is performed in front of
the house near the door. Except for the head, loins, tail and
the entrails, the left side of the animal is sacrificed to the
demons. From the more valuable parts, *e.g.* the heart, liver,
spleen, kidneys and lungs, only very small pieces are taken
away for the sacrifice to the demons. The Torma for about [776]
fourteen demons are placed on a little table ; for Ge-be-mung,
Techü-mung (the fever-demon), Tsang-dog-mung (the demon
who causes stiffness in the limbs), Me-sun-mung (the life-spirit), Mög-nyan-mung, Ka-so-mu, Me-mu and others whose names we could not ascertain. It is believed that the demons are appeased through this sacrifice, that they leave the sick person and come no more into the house.

The second part of the sacrifice takes place inside the house. The right side of the animal together with the head, the more valuable parts, the entrails, the loins and the tail are ranged in the following manner: In the large room a little distance away from the fire place, the skin of the animal is spread on the floor with its hairy side down, and the tail end nearest the fire place. Over this the skull is laid at the head end, with the snout pointing to a little table which is placed against the wall opposite to the fireplace. A little behind the skull the fore and the hind legs are placed on the right and left side of it. In between the legs are laid the breast bones, the loins, the tail, entrails and the valuable parts. These cover

755 782 up the entire skin. The blood is not used at all. On the
little table that is against the wall the Tormas are deposited
778 and in front of them the two butter-lamps. The order of the
776 Tormas is as follows: (See the drawing figs. 20 & 21) 1. Rum-
755 thing-bo-a-mu, the wife of the supreme God. 2. Rum-thing-bo-
782 a-bo, the Supreme God. 3. Nyom, the daughter-in-law. 4. Rum-thing-bo-ta-gri-köb, the son of the Supreme God. 5. San-tug-kan-dro-mu (San-tug is a place below Algara; Kan-dro-mu is evidently like the Tibetan bKa-gro-ma, a sky fairy.) 6. Don-dyö-chi-log, another spirit who personifies both the intoxicating drinks, dyö and chi. Each of these six deities has on either side of it two servants who are called Bya-ro. Torma number 2, which represents the Supreme God, is the largest. It is about five inches high, of oval shape and is decorated with ten small lumps of butter as is shown in the drawing. Torma number 1, the wife, is smaller, being about four inches high and round in shape with the same decorations of butter. Tormas number 3 to 6 are similar to number 1, except that they are three inches high only. In front of this row are three Ka to, Tormas number 7, 8 & 9. In a squarish socket five cone shaped objects are placed. These are perhaps symbolical of the five-peaked mountain, but we could find out nothing more definite about them. Torma number 10 is a deity, Ka-to-sam or Gon-hiu-so. It is about two inches high, conical in shape, and decorated with streaks of butter. The Tormas of the Bya-ro servants are all alike, a little smaller and devoid of decorations. Before the table on which are placed the Tormas and the butter-lamps, there are five bamboo vessels and a wooden cup filled with chi. The cup, which stands fourth from the left, has its rim decorated with three little lumps of butter and is called San-dyö. We notice here again the names "chi" and "dyö" borne by the sixth deity. In front of these vessels there is a second small table, and six piles of rice placed on six banana leaf-plates lie on it. On top of each pile of rice are deposited a rib of the sacrifice and tiny pieces of the heart, liver, lung, spleen and kidneys. The number SIX is therefore a standard,—there are six principal gods, six chi containers, six piles of rice and six pieces of meat.

A banana leaf-plate containing rice is placed behind the skin on which the pieces of sacrificial flesh had been placed.

[Text continues on p. 63]

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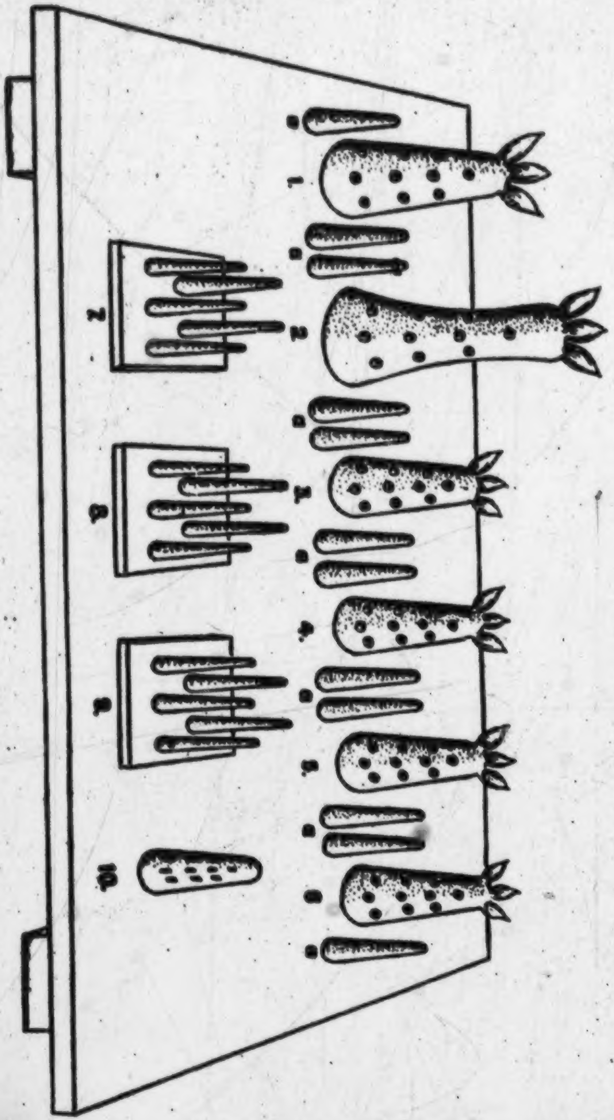
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Fig. 20, Tormas of the gods

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On the right side of this plate is an earthenware pot filled with 782
water. The Bong-thing sits in front of the sacrifice with his [778
back to the fire. Beside him is an assistant holding a brazier 776]
with incense. The incense consists of dried twigs from the
cypress trees of Tibet. The Lepchas call the tree "dag-döl- [824
gung." The priest takes in his right hand the "purifier" 293]
which is made out of three branches of Amliso, *i.e.* Po-chior.
He then summons the god and when the branches move to [787]
and fro, it is a sign that the spirit has come. Now the Bong-
thing begins the sacrificial prayer, "Sang so (incense is burnt) ;
tza ni bu tza lo ! tzab den bu geno ! (Incense offering !
Tibetan name—magic formula, praying it, holy water is to
be sprinkled from the pitcher ; it appears to be corrupt
Tibeta tzab, which is the same as chab, signifying water.) [776]

"To the star god, the Gun dö god, the sun god, the Sam 755
yig god, the Sog god, the Göm shi god, the Göm yu god (I make) 782
this offering of incense. The offering (I make) in the smoke of incense. Come hither O gods ! Gold Torma and money Torma I offer in sacrifice. Come hither Ka to and Gon hiu. I offer in sacrifice. Spirit of the millet beer—and spirit of the rice offering come hither. The sacrifice is offered, the incense offering is made. tza ni bu tza lo! tzab den bu geno (magic formula). Goddess Amu mön mu, Ha mu, Mi lig mu, Miă song mu, Chu mu, Yuk mu, Se mu ; son Chu go ri go chen chen, daughter-in-law Nyom mu, father and mother ![60]

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[60] sa hor rum bu gun dö rum bu sa daug rum bu sam yig rum bu [539]
(to the) star god, Gun dö god, sun god, Sam yig god,

sog rum bu gōm shi rum bu gōm yu rum bu sang blong ga
Sog god, Göm shi god, Göm yu god, offering of incense

pö blong ga ! (incense is offered here) bög ma o ! dyăr pa dong, gom pa
in smoke, incense offering, in smoke ! come here ! Gold Torma, money

dong daăn dong dăm dong hiu o ! Ka to gon chiu blong ga ! daăn dong
Torma sacrifice ! sacrifice ! Ka to and Gon hiu come here! sacrifice,

hiu dăm dong hiu ma o. Chi log so log
sacrifice ! Millet beer(spirit), rice offering (spirit)

blong ga daăn dong hiu dăm dong hiu o ! ön sang so ! sang so !
come here ! sacrifice ! sacrifice! Incense offering, incense offering!

tza ni bu tza lo ! tzab den bu geno ! Amu mön mu, ha mu, mi lig mu,
(Magic formula while water is sprinkled) (All are names for the wife of

miă sang mu, chu mu, yuk mu, se mu ; chu go ri go chen chen bu
the God). (Name of the son of the Supreme God)

776 755 762 I offer the smoke of incense. Come hither! To the father and to the mother I offer gold Torma, I offer money Torma; I offer, I offer, I offer incense to San tug kan dro mu; come hither! I offer incense; come hither! I offer to Chi, the millet beer spirit, to the rice offering spirit, to Dyö, the millet beer spirit; come hither! Verify this, O God, that we are sick. Come hither and tell it; come here and say it. How the head is racked with pain, the loins ache, the body, the hands, the feet are paining and the belly is aching, this O God verify. Come hither and state it. How the demons bite that examine ye gods; come here and tell it. In this manner I sacrifice this bound bull for the sick person. As a substitute for the body and the soul I offer this bull. I offer this substitute of life; I sacrifice this bound bull as a substitute for the body. I sacrifice this bound bull to Ge bu."[60a]

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[539] 60a. nyom mu (Daughter-in-law of the Supreme God). yab yum pong Father, mother (Tibetan names for the whole family of the God.)

sang blong ga kög ma o ! yab yum dyär pa dong
I offer smoke of incense ! Come here ! To Father, Mother I offer gold Torma.

gum pa dong dzän dong hiu fat ma o
I offer money Torma, I offer ! I offer !

San tug kan dro mu sang blong ga kög gad mao.
To San tug Kan dro mu offer of incense ! Come here !

plö blong ga kög gad mao !
offer of incense, come here !

chi log so log sang dyö ma djin blong ga
Millet beer (spirit), Rice offer (spirit), Millet beer (spirit) offer !

kög gad mao go yu song dog non rum dyop ga plö buo dön ga
Come here ! That we are sick, examine this O God now. Come here and tell us.

plö buo sareb song adyak non
Come here and say it. How the head aches,

achyang dog non me so dog non a go a tong dog
the loins pain, the body pains, hands and feet pain,

ta bak dog a yu rum pong dyop ga plö buo !
the belly aches. O God examine these things. Come here and tell it.

an sareb song mung nöng tsug bang ga rum dyop ga plö buo
How the demons bite examine that ye gods. Come here and tell it.

alom bö mad big djäk chim yu re söm
In this way I sacrifice this bound bull for the sick person.

me sö löm sa lo löm big bu
As a body substitute, as a soul substitute I sacrifice this bull.

sok löm bu me sö löm
I sacrifice this substitute of life, as a body substitute

big djäk bu mo Ge bu long big long djäk bu mo.
this bound bull I sacrifice. To the Ge bu, this bull, this bound bull I sacrifice."

During the prayer, the one who performed the sacrifice 755
added the expression "lang nam" in chosen places; it means 782
"the year of the bull," because the sick person was born in the [805]
year of the bull. Lang is the Tibetan expression for the
Zodiac bull. As the prayer ended, the assistant took some of [776]
the sacrificial meat, rice and chi and offered it to Me-sum-mung, the demon who represents the life-principle.

And so the sacrifice came to an end. The portions of meat
were cleared away. The fore and hind legs and the valuable [793]
parts were given to the priest. The remainder of the meat,
as also the skin, were sold in order to enable the family to make [432]
a little money. A very small portion of the meat was eaten immediately after the sacrifice. These sacrifices involve a heavy
expenditure for the family; often many sacrifices are offered
for the same illness if it is protracted, and this causes the ruin
of many people. Hence many prefer to invite the lamaistic 782
monks of the Brug-pa sect, because they are willing to drive
out demons of illness at lesser expense.

A female Mun, Mai-li-mo-la-dza-ni, whose personal 793
name is Chin-dūn, and who lives near Git-biyong described
a similar sacrificial ceremony to us which she holds at the 796
ripening of the millet crop. The preparatory arrangements 782
for the sacrifice are the same as mentioned above, with the
following differences: There are only five Tormas for the five [778
deities namely: Sa-dzug-rum, the sun god who is regarded 776]
as the Supreme Being, Ni-gung-mŏn, his wife, Ta-dik-köb,
the son, Nyom, the daughter-in-law, and San-tug-kan-dro-mu.
There are again two lamps, but five bamboo containers containing chi, five banana leaves with rice, five varieties of meat,
and incense, and holy water containers. She is helped by
her personal spirits who are Darmit, Dartik, Sang-mu, Dang-mu-rum, Asog-rum, Tzang-rum. The sacrifice progresses
in the same sequence as above. This Mun was twenty years
old when she fell ill with heart trouble. The Bong-thing
A-du said to her, "You must become Mun." She was an
apprentice to the female Mun Dja-ge-mo. In addition to her [293]
Mun belief, she also practises Lamaism, and has a little prayer
wheel and prayer cord. We could not obtain the text of
the prayers used in her sacrifice.

755 From the Gu-gu Bong-thing we procured the text of
782 another prayer said during the sacrifice of a sick person: "Fa
776 dong dju and Fa dong dō, Gom shi, Gom yu gods! (invocation).
The earth was created, the water was created, the whole
world was created. The millet beer offering chi and the rice
offering so were created. The Tōg bu ta she was created.
Come hither, ye spirits. For the benefit of the creatures, of
the world, and of the whole existing creation I sacrifice in this
manner. Against suffering and harm I sacrifice. For myself
I sacrifice. To the house-hold gods I sacrifice. As it has
been handed down from the beginning of earth's creation,
so must we sacrifice. Then to the deities of this house (of the
sick man), to the Great God of the aTzam sacrifice, to the gods
[774] of the soul and the life-spirit (of the sick man), to the Darmit[61]

[539] [61] Fa dong dju fa dong dō
Fa dong dju and Fa dong dō (names for the male and female family gods; dong is the tribal name; dju is the male Himalayan mountain spirit; dō is the female spirit, that comes from the river).

gom shi gom yu rum lyang it ung it
Gom shi and Gom yu gods! The earth was created, the water was created,

lyang sōg dōm it chi log so log it
the whole world was created. Millet beer offering, rice offering were created.

lyang tōg bu ta she it ga.
Then Tōg bu ta she was created. (This is Tak bo thing or Ta she thing so often mentioned, who was the first man or the son of the Supreme God Ta she thing.)

plō sog dōm long ming
Come here! (invitation to the spirits). For the creature's interests of the

dam ga son dōn dog ga alom sug bam
whole world and of the whole existing creation I sacrifice in this manner.

adog anot sa pe ka sug bam
Against suffering and harm I sacrifice.

ga do sug to bam rum dar ngag to bam
For myself I sacrifice also. To the household gods I sacrifice at once.

yang ayit plō nōng
Likewise as it has been handed down from the beginning of earth's creation

sug gad bam along do do li rum
thus must we make sacrifice. Now to the deities of this house, to the

atzam athing rum
Great God of the aTzam sacrifice (aTzam sacrifice is the name of the sacrifice which is laid on the bull's forehead, as we saw above),

mung gung man la rum pong darmit rum pong
so the soul and the life-spirit (of the sick man) gods, Darmit gods,

and the Dartik gods, to the water and the flood gods, to all 755 782
the gods together I sacrifice now. To our life-spirits and 776
soul gods, to Darmit, the god of life's destiny, to Alat and [774]
Ayek, the gods of procreation, to the benefactors of the souls, to the gods who lend the strength of life, I must sacrifice, since I know how to do so. The god of my personal destiny is witness; if I do not sacrifice—then may a long illness come. But if I do know how to perform the right sacrifice—that is a godly thing. If I do not know how to perform the right sacrifice but sacrifice, that is a devilish thing. If I do not perform the right sacrifice—then may the demons come here. In this manner, O Ayek and Alat, come to this spot here. Traitors shall we be to the ancestral gods if we, the descendants, sacrifice in this (wrong) way. Thus we sacrifice (rightly) as is our duty. As our ancestors did—so do we honour (the gods) We, the living, set on this spot (bull's head) millet beer and[61].

61a. dartik rum pong [539]
Dartik gods (both are supposed to be female and male messengers, who bring news
to the priest who performs the sacrifice; they are familiar deities of the Lepchas)

ung fat ung glum rum pong sug ngag la bam
to the water and the flood goods, to them altogether I sacrifice now.

dö dö daam bi daam nyong rum pong khing tsung darmit rum pong
Our own life-spirits and soul gods, god of life's destiny, Darmit,

ayek alat rum pong daö bön pu rum pong
gods of procreation, Ayek and Alat, gods as benefactors of the soul,

ong bon pu rum pong djü la mat mong
the gods who lend the strength of life; if I know how to sacrifice, so

sug yu gong nön dö dö khing tsung go nöng sug ma yön gong
I must do it. The god of my personal destiny knows it; if I do not

nön dö dö a rö a riom plö cho djü la nag yö
sacrifice, then may a long illness come, come. But if I do know

gong la rum göm
how to perform the right sacrifice, then is that a godly thing.

djü la sug ma yö nöng gong na mung göm
But if I do not know how to perform the right sacrifice that is a demonish thing.

dö dö sug la ma yöng gong na mung ai gom
If I do not perform the right sacrifice, then shall the demon be here.

a lom sog döm ga ayek alat plö
In this way and at this place Ayek and Alat come here!

nyö ting sa rum göm go yu gab djong
We shall not become traitors to the ancestral gods, if we,

ati adeo nong ga sa gad shö bu sa yuk
the descendants, sacrifice in this way. It is our duty to sacrifice thus.

nö thing ga sing long fat sa yuk gom
As our ancestors did, so we also do honour in this way.

go yu son nin sog döm ga chi log so log mat nön.
We, the living, set on this spot (head of the bull) millet beer and rice-offering.

755 rice-offerings. Thus we sacrifice. As our ancestors in ancient
782 times did—so do we now. We do not know how to speak in
776 this world; but we have arranged the sacrifice. As this world's life-spirit we, creatures, hold the branches of the Na sö and Na ling trees. We, the sons of Bong-thing, the Bong-thing sons of fire, hold them in our hands. That is the place to carry the Na sö and Na ling branches which I take consciously. Now I swear an oath to Ta she tak bo thing. Therefore I push a stone into the earth and I plant a beautifully decorated bamboo in the earth (as witnesses of the oath). In this place I take the oath. I do it in our own interest. Today, in this very place I take the oath. The paths of the demons are barred. Through the wonderful powers of Ta she tak bo thing I offer this sacrifice. Henceforward we offer a compensation, a bodily substitute: Send no more suffering to this person."[61b]

[539] 61b. Fat bam a re a thing a niö sa dal thing gung dö si ayit
Thus we sacrifice. As our ancestor did since ancient times,
plö nöng sug bam
so we also perform the sacrifice.
sog döm lyang ga go yusöng dön ma kön go yu rum
In this world we do not know how we should speak. We have arranged
tek so sog
the sacrifice (rum, god, has also the meaning of sacrifice). As this
döm löng ming tang ga son chio nin cho sa liang ga na sö na ling
world's life spirit we, creatures, hold here branches of the Na sö and Na ling
nom bong thing köb
trees (similar to the Nepalese Panisage and Sau tree). We, Bong-thing sons,

bong thing la mi köb nöng ga sog döm ga
we, Bong-thing sons of fire, hold them in our hands. Here in this place carrying
na sö na ling nom hö nöng go tsam nöng ga.
the Na sö na ling branches, I take hold of them consciously.
ta she tak bo thing riak to long tang.
To Ta she tak bo thing I swear an oath. I push a stone into the earth.
bu tsum bu yak to nön
I plant a beautifully decorated bamboo in the earth. (This ceremony takes place at the swearing and oath taking, so that the oath is sworn over the stone and the bamboo, which are placed side by side.)
sog döm riak to sön tön do ga
Here in this place I take the oath. In our own interest I do it.
sa rong sa ni riak are to nön sog döm ga
Just today I take the oath here. Thus here in this place
mung sa lom chat are tak bo she thing sa
the demons' ways are barred. Now through Tak bo she things' wonder-
a dyän sa löm nöng to Along ren me sü löm
powers, I bring this sacrifice. From now on, a bodily substitute, a
sa lö löm bo son areka gi dök ma hin
compensation we give. Send no more suffering to this person."

The ceremonies are the same as those described above. 782
Each Bong-thing has his own texts. The general scheme is, 776
however, the same. Emphasis is always laid on the claim 773
that they are based on the old traditions. The following text proves this in a particular manner :

"The genesis of Chi, the genesis of the intoxicating drink Dyŏ. This arose from an old tradition. The place of origin is where the Sang li and Sang log trees originated. In the interest of the whole world and for our use, O messenger of God, come hither. Tak bo thing, the wonder-power-god, came down for the creation of the world. Now again come down for the creation of the world. Like the tradition of the Rong, the tradition of the sons of Bong-thing came in place of the Bamboo books. It is the custom of the ten Rong sons to make a synopsis of the tradition of the creation of the earth, of the water, and of the whole world.[83] The world of the

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[83] "Tiang it dyŏ it
Chi's genesis, Dyŏ's intoxication genesis ! (fiang is millet beer, and is looked on as female ; dyŏ is an intoxicating drink, made from a substance different than millet, and is looked on as a male). [539]

lung tän o ba nang plŏ   sang li sang log cho sa lyang ga plŏ
This arose from an old tradition.   The place of origin is where the Sang li

Sang log pair of trees originated ! (Several holy trees are known. Na-oŏ and Na-ling were already mentioned. Two others are called Mong-chial and Sŏ-brio. They make three bundles of branches from these trees. One is planted in front of the altar. The Mun or Bong-thing holds the two others in his hands when he wishes to prophesy. These holy trees are expressly created and handed to men by God for ritual purposes. This is an analogy of the tree of the world).

sag dŏm tam ga   son sa dän dog ga rum fig rum plŏ
In the interest of the whole world and for our use, messenger of God come here! (fig rum is the messenger or servant of God).

Tak bo thing sa a dyän rum   lyang it ga da mu
Tak bo thing, wonder-power-god, came down for the creation of the world.

lyang it ga da   rŏng sa lung tän
For the creation of the world come down here. As the Rong tradition, the

bong thing kob sa po mik po thong chio   sa lung tän plŏ
Bong-thing sons' tradition, came in place of the bamboo books. The synopsis

lyang it   ung it   yang ming yang song
of the tradition of the creation of the earth, of the creation of water, of the creation of the whole world

782 776 [773] demons also exists here. The Mung give, in truth, a loving and adequate blessing to all. According to the origin of the tradition of our ancestors, our grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren must perfectly act. Then only shall we be blessed. If we fail to act in this manner [88] it will bring us no good. The Dar gods will destroy the heart. But if we act in the manner prescribed, our ancient forbears, gods of destiny—the Darmit—will prepare an abundance of good things. If we do not know how to act in the right manner, the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum, will always be angry at heart. If the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum, is pleased always, the heart will always find joy. The Primeval God, the God of abundance, will himself give us the joy. The god, Fat dzag yö sa fi, will be pleased always. If all of us, creatures, perform the adoration through sacrifice, we shall obtain the rich rewards of the sacrifice. If the God of heaven, the God of abundance, is honoured by sacrifice we shall be given a house.[62a]

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[539] [62a] to pong sa lung tän rong köb ga ti sa tim bam mung sa sog
is the custom of the ten Rong sons. The world of the demons
döm are ga bam mung ka tön sö pe tyo
also exists here. The Mung give, in truth, loving and
gön ga tag göng sa mön lam ma tong dö do abu amu sa lung tän plo
adequate blessing to all. As our ancestors' tradition
nong sa ga yu sön nin köb song ni tönön sug lang bam sö lang bam
originated thus, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren
must act accordingly, and indeed perfectly act.
go yu chin lob top chio. sug ma gön na log non
Then shall we receive blessings. If we do not act so it will be bad.
rum dar pong la söm dyu chogu yu sug lang bam dö do niu thing sa yo
The Dar gods will kill the heart. If we act so, our ancient ancestors
king tzum darmit rum pong la ayot ni chio go yu sug ma
gods of destiny, the Darmit, will prepare abundance. If we do not
gön gong na da lyang sa kyu rum
know how to act accordingly the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum,
na la süm kio cho da lyang sa kyu rum
will always have an angry heart. If the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum,
na la go gong sum riu cho ayot rum
is always pleased, the heart will be happy. The God of abundance,
pum rum hö do nöm chio. fat dzag yö sa fi rum na la go hio
the Primeval God himself will give it. Fat dzag yö sa fi god will always be pleased.
go yu sog döm ga son min nöng fat yu gong na
If we all in this world, if we creatures perform the adoration through sacrifice,
fat sa ayot top chio
then shall we obtain the riches of the sacrifice.
Chiö rum ayot ayit rum fat yu gong
If the God of heaven, the God of abundance, is honoured through sacrifice
li top chio dö do nio nyu sug gang
then shall we obtain a house. If we accomplish much work in our fields

If we accomplish a great amount of work in our fields we shall 782 obtain an abundance of things. Darmit (god) will always 776 grant us a happy destiny. If the lines in our foot and palms are worn out through much work, we shall obtain an abundance of things. If you do not understand how to work, you will not obtain the fruits of blessing. We honour Dar by an adoration of God. I shall perform this work until I sweat blood. Thus I work. A handful, a finger-tip-ful of the sacrifice is offered to the gods of procreation in the other life. Take it, O God, as many sacrifices. These are the fruits of the earth. All people together offer rice. When we sacrifice, many should do it together. That is the right way. God will then be at peace. But if we do not do it, then the gods of procreation will be displeased with us. We, living this life, must eat and work. If we do not work, God will not love us. The Primeval God himself says that we should go at the right time.[62b]

[62b] ayot top chio — dö do king tsum darmit na la go chio [539]
we shall obtain abundance. — A good fate, Darmit god will always grant us.

dyang dzum gö dzum säd dyet sug gan sa ayot top chio
If our foot and hand-lines are all worn out through much works, we shall obtain abundance.

sug ma gön na mong gong sö chiu
If you do not understand how to work you will not obtain

lop apot ma top na — rum sa chiong — dar sö chiong
the fruits of blessings. — As adoration of God we honour Dar.

slot sug vi oi flet nöng ga — sug bö nang yug sug
I will do this work till I sweat blood. — Thus I work.

mö tsö a ping ga ayek rum ga go ri go chion dza
In the other life to the gods of procreation, a handful, a fingertipful

apöt — rum ga blad nom pö tat chio
of the sacrifice is offered. — God, take it as many sacrifices.

apot sog dam are ga-bam — mang sa min de pö nöng
The fruits of this earth are of this kind. — All people together offer rice.

sa hö töng sa sug lang adyap — do sug gad gang na
When we sacrifice, then many should do it together. — Then is it right.

rum na la ago ni chio — sug ma gön na
For God it will then be peace. — If we do not do it, then will the

ayek alat rum na la ga yum hlum non ne. — tsö are ga bam ha sug la yo sam
gods of procreation be displeased with us. — We, living in this life,

la yung gad chio — sug la ma yu na gang la rum na la
must work and eat. — If we do not work, then God will

a go ma mad ni rum pum thing hö do sa dön ga — löd nan chiong ta tsäd dja
never love us. — The Primeval God himself says that we should go at the right time.

782
776 But we fail to understand it. We are naked at the time of our birth. Now too we are naked. When time will [761] cease for us, the time of our death, it is impossible to say. We cannot give any news of the land of the gods. And at the time God calls us, mother and father cannot call us back. When the day of death is at hand, neither elder brothers, sisters, children nor daughters-in-law can call us back. When the day of the Lord dawns, then indeed has death passed away."[82c] The sacrificial texts quoted give us an idea of their vast varieties.

(*i*) OTHER SACRIFICES

796
782 Although the Mun and the Bong-thing wield such a great influence over and dominate the whole sacrificial organisation, there are all the same, some sacrifices which do not come within their sphere.

An old Lepcha said to us, "For our original sacrifice we, the Rong folk, offer the intoxicating drink Chi, in a wooden vessel together with rice and small dried birds on a banana leaf-plate. The Chi had to be prepared by a young girl who [784] was still a virgin. The little birds had to be shot by a young lad who had had no sexual relations with anyone. The

[539] [82c] go yu ma dyak ne djek go rung a gün do
But we do not understand it. At the time of our birth we are naked,

djek lo tang ka tsäd ga la a gün lo tang gäm
at present time we are also naked. When our time is over

amäx sa sut de dön ma gön
to tell the time of our death, that is not possible.

rum lyang sa sut ma gön
To give news of the land of the gods is not possible.

rum nöng lo lek dö tsäd ga abu amu lin ma gön chiang chia
At the time when God calls us, father and mother cannot call us.

pe plö lad chiang gam anam anom aköb ason
When the day of death is coming, elder brothers, elder sisters, children and

nyom li ma top sag ni rum sa sag ni tag nam che lat non
daughter-in-law can no longer call us. When the day of God is coming, then is death passing away."

sacrifice is called Rum-fat or Lyang-rum-fat. It is performed 796
once a year in honour of Rum or Pum-thing-rum somewhere 782
in December or January. The flesh of the little birds can be dispensed with at this sacrifice, but the rice and Chi are essential. Generally it is the master of the house who is also the family
priest who performs the sacrifice, but it can be performed by 796
anyone who understands the rites."[63] 782

Sam-sing from Maria-Basti has described to us the 224
hunter's sacrifice in the following terms : "The Supreme God [776]
whom we honour originally was called Assal. We do not know any more where he lives, and so each tribe honours its own god of the hunters. In the Yok-song-mo tribe to which I belong we practise the cult of the Mut. For this we keep cocks. Whenever we go out a-hunting we take a cock and present it to the god of the hunters. After the hunt the cock is killed and sacrificed to the god, and its flesh is consumed by us.

A part of the game killed at every hunt has to be offered to Mut. We cut little pieces from each part of the body of the animal wrap them up in leaves and offer them up to the god. After the sacrifice has been offered we eat the meat ourselves.
No woman is ever allowed to be present at the sacrifice to Mut." [784]
Another member of the Rong tribe called this god of the hunters [776]
by the name of Dju-thing. He honours him in the manner described above. He also stressed the fact that a woman is never allowed to take part in, nor even to look on, this sacrifice to the hunting god.

Gorer describes a sacrifice which all hunters offer together in the month of October, *viz.* the sacrifice to Mut-rum-Tseu or Pong-rum, the protector of wild animals and patron of hunters. The wife of this god is called Shing-rum. The sacrifice consists of roasted corn, chi, dried fish and birds, ginger, arum roots and a few other tubers, sugar-cane, banana,
and worm-wood flowers. No woman is allowed to know what [784
is being prepared. She is not allowed to come near. The 841]
presence of a woman who is having her menstrual period is regarded as particularly dangerous. Chi must be prepared by a virgin or she should at least pour it into a vessel. The birds must be procured by a chaste youth. If a deer has

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[63] Report from Kalimpong.

In another legend it is told how the bear was given to the 773
Rong as game to be hunted. "One day the ancestor of the
ptso was going through the forest when he came on what he
thought was a dead bear; but really this bear was an incar- [776]
nation of Pong rum, the king of all animals and patron god of
hunters who was at the moment taking a rest outside his
incarnate body. The ancestor cut up the animal and ate
part of it; whereupon Pong rum appeared to him and said,
'You have eaten part of my body; henceforward you and your
children must serve me and worship me and make offerings
to me. Henceforward also you and your children may eat
all animals, even snakes, with impunity.' This is the reason
why the people of Pantoong could eat and enjoy snakes, [262]
whereas the rest of us would die if we ate them."[66] From these
legends it appears clearly that the Supreme God, Ta-she-thing,
gave to the Rong folk wild boar, bear, fish and honey as food
and taught them to use bow and arrows, to shoot the game,
and to catch fish with the net.

It has already been mentioned above that Pong rum, the 776
god of the hunters, goes by different names depending on 224
whether he drives towards the hunters, the game from the 825
slopes of the highest mountains, or from the foot of the mountains or the plains. It appears also that these animals are
looked upon as manifestations of the deity. The following
story, related to us by the son of the A-chi Bong-thing who
hails from a famous hunting family, lends support to this
theory. "We were hunting in the thick virgin forests at the [538]
foot of the mountains at the beginning of the plains. Suddenly
I came across an enormous bull with mighty horns. The bull
was asleep; yet, the sight of this gigantic animal so terrified
me that I staggered, as one drunk, to the ground and felt as
if my soul had left my body. That could only be the hunting
god and it was useless to shoot, as he was proof against wounds.
The bull awoke, stood erect, and with a thunderous bellowing
drove the cows and calves further into the forest. We withdrew as quickly as we could and fled for safety." The hunters 224
call the Mithan Sa-dzug-big in the Lepcha language. They 136
say that he usually lives in the higher mountains as far as the

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[66] Gorer, op. cit. p. 56.

136 Gaval and Arna are the Hindi names for the water-
[71] buffalo. In Bombay State, as far as the Central Provinces
the name Ran bhainsa, water buffalo, is used for Gaur. In Mahrathi, it is pronounced gavya ; in Tamil, katuerimai ; in Malayalam, karthu ; in Kanarese, kar-kona.[69]

[231 The wild Gaur and the Mithan cannot be tamed. The
Gayal, which is wrongly called the Mithan, has no wild
232] ancestor, but is only a cross between the wild bull and the domesticated cow. A clear proof of the mongrel characteristics of the Gayal is this : In districts where the Gaur are numerous and therefore more frequently mate with the domestic cows, the Gayal shows some resemblance to the Gaur,—the massive build with high backbone, etc. Through the constant adding of wild blood this characteristic is preserved, *e.g.* in the upper mountains of Assam. In districts where the Gaur are rare as for instance in the Chin hills, the build of the mongrel is smaller, the ridge at the back disappears, the dewlap grows larger and the horns more like those of the cows. By the fourth generation the maternal component of the ordinary cattle is again quite dominant.[70] In these circumstances one should no longer look for the wild ancestors of the Gayal.

224 There is also a species of animals which the Rong do not
262 kill, *viz.* the wild dog which is reddish in colour. Nor are
825 they allowed to eat the flesh of tame dogs and horses. In this
respect they are on par with the Tibetans.

776 There are legends pertaining to other curious creatures which are supposed to live in the thick virgin forests. Bön-mān-che is the Nepalese name ; a "Wild man" who is said to be about as large as a great monkey. The Lepcha name for this creature is Sog-pa. Another being is the Bön-sacri, the "Wild magician." This creature is believed to kidnap the children of men and lead them away into the depths of the forest, where it instructs them in the arts of magic and makes them so accustomed to the wild forest life that they shun the company of men. The wives of the Bön-sacri are the Lidini, the "Wild wives." The Rong hunter must be proof against
[782] the attacks of all these beings, and so he pays tribute to and

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[69] S. H. Prater, Indian Animals, Bombay, p. 204.

[70] S. H. Prater, op. cit. p. 201 sq.

renders homage to the god of the hunters in order that he 776
may obtain his protection. [782]

The following sacrifices which are associated with agriculture and the harvest are of a completely different type. We have already had occasion to mention Se-dyu, the goddess 776
of farming. She elects women only and passes on from mother 782
to daughter. The women perform sacrifices in her honour at least twice a year—before the sowing in the springtime and after the harvest in autumn.

The pig and the cock serve as sacrificial victims. For this sacrifice the pig comes first in the order of preference, while in the ceremonies described above we have seen that the bull is given the special preference. The understanding of this factor helps to dispel the apparent contradiction that exists in the opposing claims of some Lepchas who maintain that the pig is the most valued of all animals and others who assert that the cattle are the most valued. It all depends on [231
the type of sacrifice which is being offered at a particular 241]
moment. In the very early days they did not employ cattle to plough with; cattle were harnessed very much later. The sacrifice is performed inside the house in a corner. The man can be present if a woman performs the sacrifice, and the man can even perform the sacrifice when the woman is, for some reason, prevented from performing it.

Apart from these private sacrifices to the god of agriculture, there are also ceremonies performed at festivals and solemnised by all. There are spring and autumn sacrifices. These are associated with the ancestors of Mayal, who as we saw earlier, provided mankind with the first seeds, and instructed them about the manner of cultivation. "The people of Mayal are worshipped exclusively in connection with the crops of rice, millet and maize ; on all other occasions they are markedly excluded from the long list of supernaturals who are called on to partake of the sacrifices and give their blessings. Everybody must worship them on two occasions, after the completion of the sowing and at the harvesting of the dry rice ; in these houses where there is a Mun or a knowledgeable old man, they are also prayed to in the winter to keep away snow and hail, in the spring to protect young crops and

796 782 after the sowing of each of their grains, they are offered sakyoufaat to ensure a good harvest.

Only the three crops are connected with the people of [244 776] Mayal; the others come from different supernaturals, barley, wheat, buckwheat, and wet rice come from Kongen-bu, the god of Kinchenjunga, a Sikkimese deity; no important ceremonies are connected with these crops. Cardamum, as has already been said, comes from Nepal and is under the patronage of the foreign Elaiji-nyou, who dislikes women, in particular menstruating women. The people of Mayal are said to share [844] this dislike and should a menstruating woman visit them there would be the terrible result that all the people of Mayal would fall asleep and would not send the migratory birds."[71]

The spring sacrifice is simple. The autumn sacrifice on the contrary is very copious. For this an old experienced man is elected to represent the ancestors of Mayal and he is called Mayal-mu. A woman is selected to represent the Talyeu-mu, the sister earth. When the ceremony cannot be completed on the same day, those taking part in it stay with each other for the night. There is free intercourse [786 833 171] between the sexes; however, the comprehensive ban on incestual relations is not broken. This recalls the sexual freedom which is indulged in at the festivals of Spring and Autumn among many Asiatic peoples and which we observed in the Tibeto-Chinese province Tsing-hai among Chinese, Tujen Tibetans, etc. The representation of ancestors and agricultural spirits by masquerading in their guise is again a well-known custom among Asiatic primitives usually connected with the New Year festivals. Thus the sacrifices of the hunters and of the cultivators stand out in sharp contrast with each other.

The Lepcha, Suliman, gave us informatin about another family sacrifice to the Supreme God, Ta-she-thing. Anyone who knows the rites may perform it, whether it be a man or [262] a woman. The one who performs it must fast for three days before the ceremony, *i.e.* he must not eat the chief meal of rice but he can eat the other dishes. During this time he must [515] take three baths. The bathing place is prepared near the

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[71] Gorer, op. cit. 238 sq.

river. The bath consists of a complete immersion. After 782 796
the last bath he comes into the house to perform the sacrifice. [515]

An altar about 80 centimetres high is erected, and bananas and roots which serve as offerings are placed on it. Flowers are placed on either side. This sacrifice takes place in September. Many people assemble for it, and they later partake of food and millet beer.

One kind of sacrifice consists simply of the action of the man, who before drinking either millet beer or tea, sprinkles some drops with his fingers.[72]

(j) PARALLELS TO THE MYTHS AND THE RITUAL OF THE RONG

The intoxicating drink plays an important part in all the 273
sacrifices offered by the Rong. One kind is Chi, a brew of 796
millet. The second is Dyō, an alcoholic drink, which is made
not of millet but of different components. In all the sacri-
ficial texts and rites a special importance is attached to this
stimulant. As the text indicates, there is an individual deity
personifying the intoxicating drink, *viz.* Dōn-dyō-chi-log, who [776]
is also represented among the Tormas and is rendered the
same homage as the Supreme God and his family. This
intoxicating drink according to the tradition of the Rong is 773
of heavenly origin. Tradition has it that at the very outset 273
the ferment used in the manufacture of the intoxicant was 796
brought to mankind from the other side of the world in a cunning manner by a special messenger. Immortality, too, is linked up with this drink. Birds have a special part to play in connection with both these drinks. The quail is considered to have performed the Chi sacrifice after the deluge. Two birds are said to have fetched the drink of immortality from the land of the gods. Then a two-fold effect which causes merriment is described. When the snakes drank Chi, they went mad. To quote Stocks, "You have stolen my ferment, if you only know how to use it, you would be able to offer the 'chi' to the Rum, but now you will find that it always excites you, it will cause you all to quarrel, it may even perhaps kill you.

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[72] Cfr. op. cit. p. 246.

796 782 [778] And Tashey-takbo-thing took a supply of all these fruits with many fish from the river and sacrificed them. This was the commencement of all offering."[75]

● [776 273] Thus among the Rong, as among the Indo-Iranians the stimulating drink, finally becomes a deity. "Further, the sacrificial drink filled with daemonic strength,—like the sacrificial fire—has become a mighty god."[76]

But Soma-Haoma is however most intimately bound up with cattle. "Soma is dressed in the cow robe—the admixture of milk in it."[76a] We noticed, among the Rong, the butter decoration on the bowl of Chi.

796 782 171 Significant also is the rite by which the Lepchas place the offering of Chi on the forehead of the bull, and so bind more closely together the cult of the stimulant with cattle. All the same both cults remain autonomous and independent. This is of special value as it throws more light on the old Indo-Iranian ritual and sacrifices. Some scholars today think it is possible to connect the following :

"The cult of the killing of the Soma in the form of little plant shoots in the Vedic sacrifice and the myth of the killing of the Haoma bull in the mythology of Mithra have a broad ethnological connection, and are the Aryan shaping of an ancient prehistorical mythology and cult....Now if Zarathustra repeatedly declaims with passion and holy anger against the slaughtering of bulls it is not, as has been maintained, for agricultural and utilitarian reasons, but because this ritual act formed the essential constituent part of the old religion. Now within the Soma sacrifice, the highest and most solemn sacrifice of the old Indians, it is clear that the offering of a gift to the gods was not the most essential thing, but the renewal of the original sacrifice of the gods. As the gods in heaven prepare the Soma rain for the good of the world, so does man in the holy ceremony prepare the drink of immortality which stands for rain as the source of life, in order to share in the blessing of the godlike original sacrifice and to make sure of it for himself. And for all the slaughtering of beasts and men, which

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[75] Stocks, op. cit. p. 258.
[76] H. Oldenberg, op. cit. p. 172.
[76a] op. cit. p. 176.

776 Lakher, the Mithan must be shot with the bow and arrow.
782 These sacrifices are common among the different Naga
171 tribes.[101] Lepchas, who during the war came to these parts of the country, state that the practices of these people are in many ways similar to and in harmony with their own practices.

We find the sacrificing of bulls common to the Thai, the Lolo, the Na-chi and the Tibetans. Cattle and pigs were of primary importance among the animal offerings of ancient China. In Iran, Zarathustra waged fanatical warfare against the cattle killers. In the "Bull Gatha" (29) the soul of the bull complains to the gods that cattle are handed over to the murderous lust of men and prays for help and protection. Ahura-Mazda calls on Zarathustra to provide some protection for the cattle. At the time when the Aryans in India still preserved their nomadic tedencies, they offered bull sacrifices. Aitareya Brahmana (11·1·8) says that men at first had the horse as the principal sacrificial animal. Later, cattle took the place of the horse ; the sheep replaced the cow, and in the end cats replaced the sheep. Ultimately, however, plant offerings totally ousted the animal offerings. This is however a subsequent construction. The sacrifices of cattle occur still in modern India and the Brahmins who perform the sacrifice in South India must also eat the flesh that has been offered, and by doing so, they do not violate the rules of the caste.

Already in the Mohenjodaro culture the pictures of bulls are linked with the name of the deity Kusi, Ikusi; they are of the greatest significance and could only originate from the cult motifs. Thus the Rong sacrifices of the bull contribute greatly to the significance which the bull-cult has for mankind.

Very interesting parallels occur between the hunting rites and sacrifices of the Lepchas on the one hand, and the primitive Indian tribes and North-East Asiatic peoples on the other. Just as the Rong believe that their hunt-god,
[776] Pong-rum, incarnates himself in the form of bears, the

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[101] C. R. Stoner, The Feasts of Merit among the Northern Sangtam Tribes of Assam, Anthropos, Freiburg, 1950, Vol. XLV p. 1 sq.

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Jakuts, the Sojots, Tungus, etc., regard the bears as deities.[102] 171
These people have almost developed a pronounced bear cult. [776]

This certainly is not the case with the Rong ; but even they hold the bear in high esteem and consider it to be the most [825] intelligent and clever of all the wild animals, nay, with traits that bear has a resemblance to human beings. The bear is taboo among some Indian tribes.

The women-folk of these tribes, like the Lepcha women, are strictly excluded from all contact with the game that has been captured for the sacrifice. "The relationship of woman to game is especially delicate among all Siberian peoples. Especially during menstruation or pregnancy, she may easily ruin the luck when men go on a hunt. Further, in her heedlessness she can cause the animals to shy off to another district."[103] When the game is being conveyed into the house, a meeting with women must be avoided at all costs. Some tribes do not even permit the game to be taken in through the door because women pass in and out of it. The game is brought in through a window or some other aperture.[104] It is customary among the Golden, as also among the Irulas, not to permit a woman to look at the head of the bear, just as the Rong conceal the head of the game from the eyes of woman. Thus there occur among the hunting people who are now so widely scattered, very great similarities in the hunting rites and usages. The same can be said of their arts of magic.

This similarity is markedly evident in the case of the 796
Mun and Bong-thing of the Rong and the Siberian Shamans. 782
The only difference is, as we have already pointed out, that 171
the Rong do not employ the individual Shaman instruments 793
such as the Shaman drums and the magic daggers. The Lepchas have certainly preserved the older form. The vocational calling of the Siberian Shamans and the Rong-Mun is closely allied. Both men and women are elected. "Werbitskij mentions in his decription of Shamanism in the Altai district, that the Shaman gift is at the same time an

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[102] U. Harva, Die religiösen Vorstellungen der altaischen Völker, Helsinki 1938, p. 407 sq.
[103] U. Harva, op. cit. p. 412.
[104] op. cit. p. 414 sq.

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224 them inedible. Some of the Rong are passionate hunters and spend months away from home on their expeditions. They send the game to their families through others. These [776] hunters venerate certain deities, Gom-shi-rum and Gom-yu-rum, who inspire them with this passion for hunting. The [225] Rong hunter is intimately acquainted with the ways of the wild ; he knows every track, and can judge the time when the animal passed that way. He sets out in their tracks and pursues them tirelessly until he sights his quarry. Some of these hunters have won legendary fame. They told us of the father of A-chi Bong-thing, that he fearlessly pursued tigers and elephants. The very look in his eyes was so hypnotic that the animals, filled with frenzied fear, fled away from his glance as much as from his arrow.

411 The Lepcha makes his bow from the Ma-li-lang bamboo. The larger bows are about 1 and ¾ meter long, and the shorter ones about 1 and ½ meter. The section of the bow shaft is 1/3 of a circle. The flat side of the shaft is inwards and the concave side outward. One end of the bow consists of a double knob separated by a notch which holds the string fastening. The other end has a notched [illegible] in which the string can be easily fixed or removed. The string is made from Dzu-ya bamboo. At the ends are little ridges round which hemp threads are bound in order to fasten the string to the ends of the bow.

The arrow, which is about 50 cms. in length, is made from Po-rang bamboo. At the end is a notch which fits into the string. At the top of the shaft a fish tailed arrow head is let in. The quiver is made from the Bug-wood which grows in the plains. A bamboo loop fastened in the middle facilitates the carrying of the quiver. Another type of bow is used for shooting birds. It is smaller and the construction is slightly different. The bow shaft has a ridge of bamboo in the middle of the inner section of the shaft. The string is stretched into a little network in the middle which holds the pellets. The birds are shot with little taws of clay. (Fig. 22-24).

[text continues on p. 100]